

**Catherine Merridale**  
**MOSCOW POLITICS AND  
THE RISE OF STALIN**

**THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE CAPITAL, 1925-32**



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# **Moscow Politics and The Rise of Stalin**

**The Communist Party in the Capital, 1925–32**

**Catherine Merridale**

*Research Fellow*

*King's College, Cambridge*

**M**  
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*Cambridge*

CATHERINE MERRIDALE



# Glossary of Russian Terms and Abbreviations

<i>agitprop</i>	<i>agitatsiya i propaganda</i> (agitation and propaganda)
<i>aktiv</i>	activists in party or other organizations
<i>Comintern</i>	<i>Kommunisticheskii International</i> (Communist International)
<i>edinonachalie</i>	Management by a single person (see Chapter 4)
<i>Gosbank</i>	<i>Gosudarstvennyi bank</i> (State Bank)
<i>Gosplan</i>	<i>Gosudarstvennaya Planovaya Komissiya</i> (State Planning Commission)
<i>grupporg</i>	<i>gruppovoi organizator</i> (organiser of party groups – lowest unit in party hierarchy)
<i>guberniya</i>	province (until 1929)
<i>gubkom</i>	party committee in <i>guberniya</i>
<i>ispolkom</i>	<i>ispolnitel'nyi komitet</i> (executive committee)
<i>kolkhoz</i>	<i>kollektivnoe khozyaistvo</i> (collective farm)
<i>Komsomol</i>	<i>Kommunisticheskii Soyuz Molodezhi</i> (Communist League of Youth)
<i>krai</i>	large territorial unit, usually in national republics
<i>kraikom</i>	party committee in <i>krai</i>
<i>kulak</i>	Well-to-do peasant, usually employing hired labour
<i>kul'tprop</i>	<i>kul'tura i propaganda</i> (culture and propaganda)
<i>MK</i>	<i>Moskovskii Komitet</i> (Moscow Committee of the Communist Party)
<i>MGK</i>	<i>Moskovskii Gorodskoi Komitet</i> (Moscow City Committee of the Communist Party)
<i>MGSPS</i>	<i>Moskovskii Gubernskii Sovet Professional'nykh Soyuzov</i> (Moscow <i>Guberniya</i> Council of Trade Unions)
<i>MKK</i>	<i>Moskovskaya Kontrol'naya Komissiya</i> (Moscow Control Commission)
<i>MOSPS</i>	<i>Moskovskii Oblastnoi Sovet Professional'nykh Soyuzov</i> (Moscow <i>Oblast</i> Council of Trade Unions)
<i>Mossovet</i>	<i>Moskovskii Sovet</i> (the Moscow Soviet)
<i>MSNKh</i>	<i>Moskovskii Sovet Narodnogo Khozyaistva</i> (Moscow Council for the National Economy)
<i>Narkom</i>	<i>Narodnyi Komissar</i> (People's Commissar)
<i>NEP</i>	<i>Novaya Ekonomicheskaya Politika</i> (New Economic Policy)
<i>Nepman</i>	Beneficiary of NEP, usually a trader or speculator
<i>obkom</i>	Party Committee in <i>oblast'</i>
<i>oblast</i>	Province (after 1929)
<i>OGPU</i>	<i>Ob"edinennoe Gosudarstvennoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie</i> (Unified State Political Administration: the political police)
<i>okrug</i>	territorial unit between <i>oblast</i> and <i>raion</i> , abolished in 1930
<i>okruzhkom</i>	Party Committee in <i>okrug</i>

<i>orgraspred</i>	<i>organizatsionno-raspredelitel'nyi otдел</i> (the organisation-assignments department)
<i>otdel</i>	department
<i>otsev</i>	'dropping out' from party or other organisations
<i>podpol'shchik</i>	'undergrounder' (member of the Bolshevik Party who joined before 1917)
<i>raikom</i>	<i>raion</i> committee of the Communist Party
<i>raion</i>	administrative unit, coinciding with a ward in a city or a district in rural areas.
RKP(b)	<i>Rossiskaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya</i> ( <i>bol'shevikov</i> ) Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks)
RSFSR	<i>Rossiskaya Sovetskaya Federativnaya Sotsialisticheskaya Respublika</i> (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)
<i>shefstvo</i>	'patronage' or tutelage by one organisation or group over another. Most used of factories' patronage of collective farms or government institutions, involving the supply of advice, materials and cadres.
<i>smychka</i>	revolutionary alliance between peasantry and proletariat, the basis of NEP
<i>sovnarkhoz</i>	<i>sovet narodnogo khozyaistva</i> (economic council)
<i>Sovnarkom</i>	<i>Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov</i> (Council of People's Commissars)
<i>stazh</i>	length of time, for example of party membership or work in industry
<i>troka</i>	group of three people
TsK	<i>Tsentral'nyi Komitet</i> (Central Committee of the Communist Party)
TsKK	<i>Tsentral'naya Kontrol'naya Komissiya</i> (Central Control Commission)
<i>Uezd</i>	territorial unit between <i>guberniya</i> and <i>raion</i>
<i>ukom</i>	<i>uezd</i> party committee
VKP(b)	<i>Vsesoyuznaya Kommunisticheskaya Partiya</i> ( <i>bol'shevikov</i> ) All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks)
VSNKh	<i>Vysshii Sovet Narodnogo Khozyaistva</i> (Supreme Council for the National Economy)
VUZ	<i>Vysshee Uchebnoe Zavedenie</i> (Higher Educational Establishment)
VTUZ	<i>Vysshee Tekhnicheskoe Uchebnoe Zavedenie</i> (Higher Technical Educational Establishment)
<i>vydvizhenie</i>	Promotion (usually of workers into state and economic apparatuses)
<i>zavkom</i>	<i>zavodskii komitet</i> (trade union committee in factory)

# Introduction

This book is about the Communist Party in the city of Moscow between 1925 and 1932. For Moscow, as for the whole of the Soviet Union, these were years of transformation, when the broad promise of the revolution finally narrowed into the Stalinist political and economic system. The New Economic Policy's mixed economy, which enjoyed its best years in 1926–7, was replaced from 1929 by a centralised, state-directed structure dedicated to the Soviet Union's planned development into a major industrial power. Agriculture, which in 1925 was flourishing on the basis of a small-holding peasantry, was collectivised between 1929 and 1930, and by 1932 it was on the brink of its severest crisis in living memory. Both these processes saw the destruction of whole classes: in the cities the so-called Nepmen, small-time entrepreneurs or self-employed tradespeople; in the countryside the small-holding peasants, and especially the stratum labelled 'kulak', comprising the more successful peasant farmers. Politics also was transformed. The 1920s were not years of pluralism (the only legal political party was the Bolshevik Party), but they saw more open debate about major issues than would be permitted again for half a century. The last organised opposition to operate on a national scale was defeated by 1929. Stalin's Communist Party attempted to present a united face to its people, and dissidence of any kind was liable to severe repression. By 1932, in short, the main characteristics of the Stalinist economic, social and political order were clearly visible.

Two main problems are addressed in this book. The first concerns Stalin and Stalinism. In 1928 Moscow's leadership was purged after an intense political struggle, and a new elite, consisting of people who sympathised with the idea of a 'socialist offensive on all fronts', was installed. How did these supporters of Stalin come to prevail in Moscow, and what did their victory mean for politics in the city? This important question has been asked in general terms many times, but few historians have had the opportunity to study the process in detail at the local level. Even relatively simply questions, such as the identity of members of the Stalinist faction outside the national elite, remain the subject of conjecture. More complicated issues, such as the relationship between the Bolshevik factions and the party as a whole, have scarcely been explored at all.

The book's second theme is the party as an institution, its membership, role and effectiveness. Most studies of the Communist Party have been interested primarily in high politics. Those which look further have tended to treat it as a specimen for dissection, laying out the pieces with scientific precision, indicating which connected with which and which controlled the others. In this book I have tried to do something different; to recreate the lives of Moscow Communists during the crucial period of economic, social and cultural transformation. The aim has been to establish how the party fitted into Moscow's life as well as how it responded to the commands of the Politburo. Consistent emphasis has been placed on the party elite's relationship with its rank and file, and on the interplay between Moscow's politics and its people, including those who were not members of the party at all.

Questions of this kind have become particularly controversial in the last few years. In the West a number of factors have conspired to concentrate scholarly minds on the question of Stalinism and Soviet society<sup>1</sup>. Improved access to Soviet archives has made it possible to ask questions which could not have been answered a few years ago. Challenges to the totalitarian model of Soviet politics<sup>2</sup> have also impelled historians to look at new aspects of Soviet development, often drawing parallels with other industrialising societies. The totalitarian model always had its critics, and in Great Britain at least a strong empirical tradition persisted in Soviet historical studies,<sup>3</sup> but since the early 1970s the reaction against Cold War political science has been particularly striking. Scarcely an author in the last ten years or so has neglected to throw his or her handful of earth over the coffin of the totalitarian theory.<sup>4</sup> Economic historians have shown that central planning was often counter-productive, and that many of the period's vaunted achievements were obtained at the cost of disasters elsewhere in the production cycle.<sup>5</sup> Social historians have shown that the Soviet population, though unsettled, constantly on the move in social as well as geographical terms, was not after all atomised, but adapted with striking resilience to the kaleidoscopic changes of life in Stalin's Russia.<sup>6</sup> Recent research has also suggested that a substantial section of the Soviet population accepted or even abetted aspects of Stalinist policy.<sup>7</sup> Political historians have drawn attention to chaos in the Soviet Union's provinces in the 1930s, justifiably raising questions about the centre's grip on political affairs.<sup>8</sup> The debate is far from resolved, but few historians would now insist that the totalitarian model is essential for understanding the Soviet system. Most would agree that the historical evidence supports a broader view of the policy-making process, and of

the way in which the state interacted with sections of Soviet society. Political scientists have failed to come up with a credible alternative model, but the notion of totalitarianism is no more helpful for that.

This Western debate has been exciting and fruitful. Even more dramatic, however, has been the burgeoning of scholarly controversy about Stalinism in the Soviet Union. From the early 1930s the work of Soviet political historians was generally even more sterile than the output of Cold War totalitarian theorists. Stalin's victory within the party was presented as the triumph of good over evil, a victory which buried forever the old peasant Russia, with its 'mud and cockroaches'. The Soviet people were not absent from this official history, but featured as heroic supporters of the party leadership. Most seemed to benefit from Stalin's policies, few were described as opposing them. A window was knocked in this historical brick wall in the years after Stalin's death.<sup>9</sup> But the rays of light shed over Stalinism were thin and quickly extinguished.<sup>10</sup> From the mid-1960s until 1987 orthodoxy was restored, and Soviet work on the history of the 1920s and 1930s offered little help to serious scholars of any nationality.<sup>11</sup>

It has been with *glasnost* that pluralism has swept back into professional history, albeit on the coat tails of a wider debate in the press and other public media. In the last two years, Soviet writers, journalists and historians have experimented with most of the available theories of Stalinism.<sup>12</sup> They began with revelations about the leader's mistakes and crimes, many accompanied by the protagonists' personal reminiscences.<sup>13</sup> But the 'personality cult' and its consequences are no longer enough for some Soviet historians. They are looking now at the deeper reasons for Stalin's success. Totalitarian models of the post-revolutionary period, often rather crudely borrowed from the West, are favoured by many of the more outspoken Soviet historians and political scientists. Others are examining the revolutionary process as a whole, on occasion even questioning Lenin's role. And some are beginning to study the mood of ordinary people at the end of the 1920s and into the 1930s, raising at last the question of the Soviet people's collective relationship with Stalin's crimes. As one writer put it in 1988, 'By perpetuating the memory of the victims of the people's tragedy we commit an act of nationwide repentance. We admit our guilt to them. The law does not know this guilt. Conscience alone knows it. We are to blame for the fact that they fell victim. Memory helps us save our soul.'<sup>14</sup>

For some historians in both East and West, therefore, the problem of Stalinism is no longer merely a matter of high politics, but involves

questions about society and its relationship with the political structure. These are not easy questions to answer. In the first place, it is far more difficult to confront the idea that appalling episodes like the plundering and exile of millions of peasants in the name of 'dekulakisation' or the imprisonment and murder of tens of thousands of officials in the great purge were widely condoned and even abetted than it is to blame them on a corrupt and ruthless Stalinist clique. Familiar models such as totalitarianism or personal dictatorship are convenient because they provide a clear framework in which 'crimes' can be placed. Historians in search of a new interpretation of Stalinism will have to explain the crimes – for there were plenty of those – but they will also have to face the kinds of political and moral problem which have beset historians of Nazi Germany in the last two decades. Although in the West it is the Soviet Union's severest critics who have traditionally advocated them, totalitarian models of the Stalinist dictatorship no longer necessarily offer the most potent challenge to the Soviet regime. As Jürgen Habermas asked of German colleagues, 'Can one take responsibility for the interconnected origins of those crimes with which our existence is historically woven in any other way than by means of a solidaristic memory of what is now irreparable, in any other way than by means of a reflective, critical attitude vis-à-vis the traditions that endow our identity?'<sup>15</sup> Russian writers are discovering that the debate about Stalinism has the potential to challenge the moral foundation of the Soviet Union's entire post-revolutionary history. It is a conclusion which many who criticise the so-called 'revisionists' in the West for 'whitewashing' the Soviet system have yet to draw.<sup>16</sup>

Resistance to these reinterpretations of the past comes from a number of different directions. In the Soviet Union, as in Germany, there are still people alive who remember the difficult times, and these include prison camp guards as well as their victims.<sup>17</sup> The people who believed Stalin's promises, who built up Soviet industry in the 1930s or fought in the Great Patriotic War, may never be able to accept the story of Stalinism's darker side. The effects of *glasnost* have yet to be felt as strongly in the provinces as in the large cities of European Russia.<sup>18</sup> Opponents of the new historiography include the retiring generation of officials and some established historians.<sup>19</sup> The debate in the West touches fewer people, but among historians it is no less intense. Critics have attacked some recent interpretations for 'shifting the blame' or even 'apologizing for Stalin'.<sup>20</sup> The totalitarian thesis is still occasionally invoked.<sup>21</sup> Explanations based on personal responsibility also continue to be offered. Depending on the writer's viewpoint, the negative sides

of Soviet development after 1929 have been attributed to both Lenin and Stalin.<sup>22</sup> Other historians have sought to condemn the Communist Party leadership as a whole.<sup>23</sup> And currency continues to be given to the idea, originally developed by Trotsky,<sup>24</sup> that Stalinism was the product of an entrenched bureaucracy. According to this account, the working class, the authors of the Revolution, were expropriated by the Communist Party after 1917. The nature and timing of this expropriation have been variously described, as has the degree to which the ruling elite constitutes a 'class' in the Marxist sense<sup>25</sup>. But the essential point is that the Revolution was 'betrayed'. For scholars of this persuasion, historians will seek in vain for evidence of a harmony of interests between the ruling party and sections of the working class after 1917.<sup>26</sup>

Historians on all sides in the debate over Stalinism have dug their trenches deeply, a practice guaranteed to impair the broad view.<sup>27</sup> And in the heat of argument some have been tempted to adopt extreme positions, either exaggerating or minimising the horrors of Stalinism or the extent of the dictator's responsibility.<sup>28</sup> Serious scholarly work in the West as in the USSR has been hindered by the political implications of its findings. At one level the intensity of the political controversy generated by the problem of Stalinism has sharpened and invigorated the scholarly debate among historians. But history cannot bend indefinitely under the weight of current political imperatives. In the end the work of judicious interpretation becomes impossible.

The minefields of controversy are not the only obstacle facing historians of Stalinism, however. Unusually for an episode of recent history, the difficulty of studying Stalinism is compounded by a lack of reliable historical sources. For many years access to Soviet archives was tightly restricted. Even now scholars of all nationalities have problems obtaining all that they require. Communist Party archives are closed to all but the most favoured Soviet historians, and the archives of the secret police, potentially an invaluable source, remain closed.<sup>29</sup> Historians may also doubt whether some of the material they would like, for example memoirs, official minutes, court records and surveys of public opinion, ever existed at all. All this means that there are many important things about the inter-war Soviet Union that we shall never know for certain. To some extent the questions which can be asked are dictated by the materials available to answer them.

These problems were at the front of my mind when I began the research for this book in 1983. Since then many Soviet archives have become more accessible and a large amount of excellent primary research by Western scholars has been published. Relatively little new

work has been done on the lower levels of the party, however<sup>30</sup>. Emphasis is still laid on leadership and control. Even those seeking to present alternatives to the crude picture of the 'rise of Stalin' have not generally explored the relationship between the party leadership and its grass roots.<sup>31</sup> Although we now have excellent studies of workers, economic managers and intellectuals in the Stalin period, we know very little about the way these people related to the party or influenced it from within. This book, which is the first Western study of a major urban party organisation in the USSR during the years of the first Five Year Plan, aims to explore some of these areas using Moscow as a case study<sup>32</sup>.

The material available on the Moscow party is less complete than the Smolensk Archive, captured by the Germans in 1941 and now kept in the United States. But it includes a variety of types of source which between them build up a remarkably vivid picture of the capital's political life. The Moscow party's newspaper, *Rabochaya Moskva*, provides accounts of all the Moscow Party Committee's major meetings, at least until the end of the 1920s, together with scattered pieces on the work of the district (*raion*) and factory party committees. Here changes in the city – the conversion of a church into a hospital, the redesigning of a square, the building of an underpass under the main commercial street – are reported beside the party's meetings. Moscow comes to life, and it is possible to catch the excitement and confusion of the period, to weigh the pressures under which party officials had to work and to follow their ambitious plans from discussion to achievement or disaster. The Moscow Committee also published specialised journals: *Izvestiya Moskovskogo Komiteta*, a factual publication covering its main resolutions and decisions as well as some of its debates, *Sputnik Kommunist*, a wider-ranging party journal which appeared every other week, and *Propagandist*, devoted to party propaganda and agitation. Other periodicals, including those published by the party's Central Committee, also regularly gave space to the Moscow party. Among these were *Pravda*, *Izvestiya Tsentral'nogo Komiteta* (called *Partiinoye Stroitel'stvo* after 1929) and the theoretical journal, *Bol'shevik*. These were also dozens of pamphlets, abstracts and other short publications, some devoted to party work, others giving statistics on aspects of Moscow's development. Finally among the published sources, it is possible to obtain some of the stenographic reports of Moscow Committee conferences and plenums and even some reports of *raion* committee meetings. These provide the richest evidence for controversy within the Moscow party and for changes in its practice over time.



Even more vivid are the archival accounts of the meetings of party organisations in factories, which were uncensored. Often kept by hand, they provide glimpses into the lives of ordinary Communists, people who had other jobs to do and met to discuss important political questions after office hours. The Soviet archives also contain reminiscences of Communists active during the first Five Year Plan, many of which were collected between 1933 and 1935. Among the sources available in the West, the Trotsky Archive is very valuable, as are some memoirs of the period.<sup>33</sup> After Smolensk, we can probably find out more about Moscow than any other city in the Soviet Union.

These sources offer many insights into the political history of the period. Among the issues which are discussed in this book are the interaction between the leadership and the rank and file, the development and defeat of the last organised political oppositions and the rise and fall of the mass, proletarian model for the party. These questions, which only a local study can illuminate thoroughly, are crucial for understanding the party's relationship with society. Concentrating on the capital also has particular advantages. Moscow was not only under the eye of the country's leaders; for most it was their home. Its own political elite received more resources and information than any other as a result. Moscow's was regarded as one of the most privileged of the local party organisations, and the Moscow party was often held up as a model to others. In many ways, therefore, its party's history shows what could be expected in the best possible circumstances from the provincial political structure. But the city also felt the chill of official criticism more frequently than remoter areas. Its leadership still committed policy errors, and their mistakes sometimes led to disaster. Moscow's failures show where we should look for the limits of centralised political administration.<sup>34</sup>

If groups outside the political elite had any influence over the shape of Stalin's 'revolution from above', then Moscow should also be the place to look for the evidence. The Moscow party drew on a population more literate, more proletarian and closer to power than almost any other in the country.<sup>35</sup> Many party activists in the capital regarded their voluntary party work as a genuine and important contribution to the building of socialism. This book will show that initiatives were indeed taken at the lowest levels, though seldom on major issues. Moscow's history supports the suggestion that 'Stalinist "revolution from above" not only permitted but actually *required* lower-level officials to respond to urgent but imprecise "signals" by improvising and taking initiatives that, if unsuccessful could always be disavowed

by the leadership'.<sup>36</sup> Many new projects were tentative, experimental and quickly reversed. The national leadership, and even the Moscow Committee, could not cope with the economic revolution it had helped to induce, and in the panic of the first Five Year Plan initiatives could be taken by almost any official willing to shoulder the responsibility. These individual acts helped to shape the development of Stalinist Russia, although the decision to embark on the new course was taken by the political elite, as were all the major policy decisions of the period.

The case study of Moscow can also contribute significantly to the debate about rank and file political allegiance and the popularity or otherwise of the Stalinist regime. The Left had been influential in the capital in the early 1920s, but failed to secure a significant following after 1923. In the mid-1920s, however, they ran a campaign in Moscow which tells us a great deal about their tactics and appeal. The Right tried to use the Moscow party as a power base in 1928, but were also unable to win much support among its rank and file. Why did the movements fail? What kind of following were they able to command, and how were they perceived in Moscow? Equally, how did people perceive the party majority and Stalin in particular? The question of political attitudes is among those which will probably never wholly be resolved. But it can be approached by looking at who joined the party and if possible for what reasons. It can also be inferred from archival references to popular attitudes, including those produced by opposition groups. Stalin's second revolution undoubtedly created its own beneficiaries and therefore supporters. Many of these were Communist Party members. It is an open question how important their support was to Stalin's victory, and also how much support he enjoyed among people whose commitment to politics was weaker. This study suggests that in Moscow there was a groundswell of sympathy for his policies, as far as they were popularly understood, in 1928 and the first months of 1929. The reasons for this sympathy, and its importance for what happened later, is one of the central themes of this book.

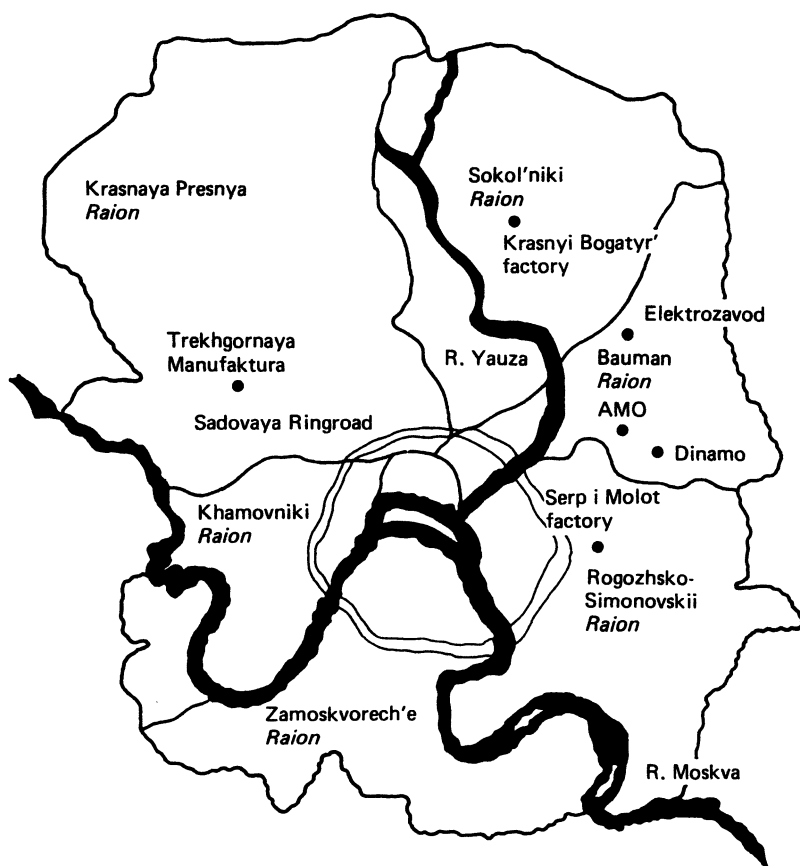
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The book is divided into two parts. Part I follows Moscow's political history from the time of the Trotskyists' defeat at the end of 1924 to the end of the first Five Year Plan in 1932. For Moscow, this period began with the arrival in the city of a new party first secretary, Nikolai Uglanov, and ended with the consolidation of the rule of another, Lazar

Kaganovich. In between Moscow saw several major political crises, and two first secretaries were removed after confrontations with the Kremlin. This chronological account is not confined to high politics; central themes include the relationship between the elite and the rank and file, the role of social pressures and the impact in Moscow of high-level struggles. Part II takes aspects of the party's organisation and work and analyses them thematically. High politics are always present, but these chapters focus on the work of ordinary party members and the efforts of their leaders to make sense of the party's role in Moscow. This period is conventionally divided by historians into two parts, with a break in 1928–9. Covering the whole span, however, allows comparisons to be made between the 1920s and the period of Stalinist transformation. The discontinuities between the two periods of Soviet history have been emphasised by many historians and are immediately striking, but it is also important to see which problems beset the Communist Party throughout these early years of political consolidation.

I have not included a chapter on Moscow's geography, largely because several competent descriptions of the city already exist in English.<sup>37</sup> But no account of Moscow's politics can begin without a tour of its setting. Moscow was – and is – a fascinating city, whose character has not been suppressed despite the dramatic changes of the last seventy years. It has been the capital of the USSR since March 1918, when the precarious Soviet government moved eastwards from Petrograd to escape the Allied invasion.<sup>38</sup> Security was not the only reason for the move, however. When the capital moved east, the Bolsheviks turned away from capitalist Europe and invoked their Slavic heritage. Moscow was regarded as more Russian than Petrograd, and the move eastwards was as important symbolically as it was strategically convenient. But the new capital was also less sophisticated than Petrograd, as well as architecturally haphazard. Muscovites referred to their city as 'the largest village' in Russia.<sup>39</sup> For the thousands of clerks and government advisers, accustomed to civilised Petrograd, the long train ride to Moscow in 1918 must have been a depressing one, for their new city lacked grace, and it was a long way across primitive Russia to the comforts of Scandinavia or Germany.

Moscow lies on the rivers Moskva and Yauza (see Map I.1, p. 10). Despite frequent devastation by fire, it has retained its ancient street pattern, which is based on the oriental system of concentric circles, originally lines of fortification. The Kremlin stands at the heart of the first circle, the second is the 'boulevard ring', including the present Tverskoi, Gogol'evskii and Petrovskii boulevards, and the third, which



Map I.1 Moscow in 1925

even in the 1920s marked the boundary between the fashionable centre and the sprawling suburbs of the city, is the Sadovoe ring. Moscow was divided in the 1920s into six administrative units (called *raions* – see the glossary of Russian terms and abbreviations on pp. xiv–xv) which cut the circular city into slices, meeting near the Kremlin. The largest, Krasnaya Presnya, lay to the west of the centre, and was a mainly proletarian area. By contrast, Khamovniki *raion*, to the south-west, was dominated by institutions of higher education (VUZy) and government offices. However, the organisation of the city meant that no administrative district was exclusively proletarian or white-collar. The real division was between centre and suburbs, while in all areas

the post-revolutionary redistribution of apartment rooms within buildings had pushed the different social groups together.<sup>40</sup>

In the centre of Moscow were concentrated educational institutions, government offices, and the apartment residences of the influential. The exception was the area from the Arbat<sup>41</sup> to Okhotnyi Ryad (now Prospekt Marksa), which was largely occupied by ordinary working people, some of whom had been accommodated in the requisitioned houses of merchants and entrepreneurs. Beside these proletarian terraces and government buildings were the remnants of capitalist Moscow, at least until 1929. One observer regarded the Tver Road (the present Gorkii Street) as 'a microcosm of the half-socialist, half-capitalist Russia that was expiring. Along its length were private stores, state shops, private restaurants, gypsy cellars, the government-operated gambling Casino, private peddlars, beggars and prostitutes, the offices of state trusts and the headquarters of leading newspapers'.<sup>42</sup> The other teaming focus of the capitalist city was the Sukharevka, a market located on the north-eastern edge of the Sadovoe on the site of the present Kolkhoz Square. There, as in many of the smaller markets in the city, one could buy almost anything, although prices were high.<sup>43</sup> Beyond the Sadovoe were the 'new' areas, mostly industrial, poorly served for everything from transport to street lighting. The majority of the city's proletariat lived in the south-east and west of the city, near factories dating from the turn of the century.

Living conditions for most people were cramped, with several families sharing single rooms and unmarried workers packed into pre-revolutionary barracks-style accommodation.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, however, Moscow was a sprawling city, with large parks and farms between the crowded suburbs.<sup>45</sup> A visitor to Moscow in the winter of 1926–7 suggested that 'the Russian village played hide and seek' in the city's streets. He explained that

If you pass through any of the large gateways – they often have wrought-iron gratings, but I never encountered one that was locked – you find yourself at the threshold of a spacious settlement whose layout is often so broad and so expansive that it seems as though space cost nothing in this city. A farm or a village opens out before you. The ground is uneven, children ride around in sleighs, shovel snow; sheds for wood, tools, or coal fill the corners, there are trees here and there, primitive wooden stairs or additions give the sides or backs of houses, which look quite urban from the front, the appearance of Russian farm houses . . . In fact, nowhere does Moscow

really look like the city it is, rather it more resembles the outskirts of itself. The soggy ground, the wooden booths, the long convoys of raw materials, the cattle being driven to slaughter, the shabby dives can all be found in the most central parts of the town.<sup>46</sup>

This was the city which the Bolsheviks began, from 1921, to transform into a model socialist capital. Most of their plans in the 1920s were dominated by the need to restore urban facilities to their pre-revolutionary level. Little had been done to change the city's layout before 1925. A few street names had been changed in accordance with the spirit of the new age, but despite the heroic promises of the city administration public amenities were few, and the transport network, housing provision and sanitary conditions in the capital were probably in a poorer condition than they had been in the days of the last tsar. Between 1912 and 1933, the area of the city grew by over 10000 hectares,<sup>47</sup> much of the new territory being occupied by factories and workers' flats. But expansion was not generally accompanied by significant improvements for the population. Although street lighting was introduced in the centre in 1927, the drainage and sewerage systems were rudimentary. In 1927 the river Yauza flooded the northern part of the city for over two weeks; later reports found that new housing was being built with no drainage whatsoever. Until 1931 cobbled streets were the rule. Public transport was overcrowded and did not reach outlying districts.<sup>48</sup> Above all, the problem of housing for the growing population worsened steadily, so that by the end of the 1920s politicians had begun to refer to a 'housing crisis' in the capital.<sup>49</sup>

Improvements in the 1920s did not always enjoy the support of the population. Seemingly innocent innovations, such as the introduction of more bus routes, could spark criticism, in this case because workers (who either walked or took trams) considered them to be 'bourgeois'.<sup>50</sup> Attacks on the Church caused widespread consternation. In the 1920s churches without bells or cupolas, shrouded in scaffolding and teeming with men hammering and plastering them for conversion into clubs, schools and canteens, were a common sight.<sup>51</sup> From the official point of view, the practice had the dual benefit of providing much-needed facilities and eliminating relics of the 'religious cult' in the city. But in a society where religion still mattered to a majority of the population, resistance could be serious. One of Moscow's most sacred religious buildings, which stood in the way of a new vista in the city, was demolished overnight by young Communists. They completed the task in four hours, thus avoiding a public outcry.<sup>52</sup>

Although the debate about replanning Moscow began before the revolution, it was not until 1931 that a wide-ranging plan was finally approved by the party's Central Committee.<sup>53</sup> The preamble to the new proposals noted that improvements in the city, although substantial, had failed to keep pace with the growth in population, and singled out trams, housing, roads and the 'very unsatisfactory sanitary conditions in the city' as the main problems.<sup>54</sup> The most ambitious part of the plan, and the one for which it is remembered, was the proposal to construct an underground railway for the capital, the famous Moscow metropolitan. But all aspects of urban development were covered, including the building of housing for not less than half a million in the next year, the provision of more kindergartens and crèches, the building of more shops to serve the outlying districts, and the improvement of services, including trams, heating, especially domestic heating, and a better sewerage network. All this suggests what photographs of Moscow in this period confirm; that until well into the 1930s the Soviet capital was anything but a modern city.

The physical deterioration of large areas of Moscow was not the only problem bequeathed by the revolutionary period. The war, revolution and Civil War also reduced the city's population, possibly by as much as a third.<sup>55</sup> About 300000 people left the capital to take part in the war effort after 1918,<sup>56</sup> and some of the wastage was the result of epidemics and higher infant mortality. The most significant factor, however, was the mass flight from the city of people with contacts in the countryside.<sup>57</sup> Although demographic recovery was swift during NEP, the city's population had changed. In the 1920s Moscow's would be a young population, including a higher than average proportion of women and children under 15.<sup>58</sup> An even more significant contribution was made by the tens of thousands of adults who arrived in the city seeking employment.<sup>59</sup> So rapid was this in-migration that planners were already concerned about the problem of housing them and servicing the expanding city in 1925.<sup>60</sup> This concern would recur with increasing urgency for the rest of our period. In 1925 Moscow's population was approximately 1 743 500 (see Table I.1). By 1933 it had risen to well over three and a half million.

The most numerous section of the population, and the fastest-growing, was the industrial proletariat (see Table I.2). Moscow was an industrial centre of the first importance, accounting, in 1927, for 16.1 per cent of the country's industrial workforce.<sup>61</sup> This proportion fell as new industrial centres were established in the 1930s,<sup>62</sup> but overall the number of industrial workers in the capital increased continuously.

Table I.1 The population of Moscow, 1913–34 (at 1 January)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population size</i>	<i>Percentage of previous year</i>
1913	1 665 800	—
1914	1 724 800	103.5
1915	1 800 600	104.4
1916	1 893 200	105.1
1917	1 896 300	100.2
1918	1 768 600	93.3
1919	1 550 200	87.7
1920	1 267 800	81.8
1921	1 148 000	90.6
1922	1 278 400	111.4
1923	1 520 700	118.9
1924	1 628 200	107.1
1925	1 743 500	107.1
1926	1 888 400	108.3
1927	2 031 800	107.6
1928	2 167 300	106.7
1929	2 313 900	106.8
1930	2 468 700	106.7
1931	2 724 000	110.3
1932	3 135 000	115.1
1933	3 663 300	116.9
1934	3 613 600	98.6

*Source: Moskva v tsifrakh* (Moscow, 1934) p. 13.

As late as 1929 most workers in Moscow had joined the workforce during the First World War. But the hiring of new workers from the surrounding countryside began as soon as the Civil War was over, and continued at a rapidly increasing pace. By 1932 new arrivals, with less than three years' experience in industry, constituted a majority of the factory labour force.<sup>63</sup> As their numbers increased, friction developed between these new arrivals and the 'cadre' workers. The conflicts between generations of workers complicated Moscow's industrial relations and also influenced political life in the factories.<sup>64</sup> Recent arrivals, for example, were less likely to join the party than workers who had lived in Moscow since their youth, and were more likely to be religious believers, alcoholics or hooligans.<sup>65</sup> Another important influence in workers' lives was their relationship with their original villages. A substantial proportion of all workers still held land outside the city, often farmed by relatives. This phenomenon, more common



Table I.2 The Social composition (000s) of Moscow's population  
(17 December 1926, 1 April 1931 and 1 July 1933)

	Year			
	1926	1931	1933	1933 as a % of 1926
Workers	293.2	673.0	823.4	280.8
Employees	263.3	427.6	649.9	246.8
Ancilliary workers	91.4	160.7	214.6	234.8
Domestics	42.2	54.2	52.6	124.6
All employed workers	690.1	1 325.5	1 740.5	252.2
Self-employed craftsmen	91.1	94.3	76.0	83.6
Students receiving stipends	34.9	98.1	89.1	255.3
Pensioners	39.8	74.2	85.9	215.8
Unemployed	130.3			
Not working	35.0	3.6	1.3	3.7
Dependants	939.3	1 088.6	1 339.3	142.6
Others	65.4	64.8	59.0	90.2
Total population	2 025.9	2 781.3	3 416.5	168.6

Source: *Materialy o khozyaistve Moskvy*, p. 116.

among older workers than the new generation, was believed to lead to 'reactionary' political behaviour, a definition which included reluctance to join the Communist Party, and was officially discouraged.<sup>66</sup> But tradition was stronger than party doctrine, and the links between city and village persisted at least until 1930.

At the beginning of our period most of Moscow's industrial workers were employed in the textile and clothing industries.<sup>67</sup> At the end of 1925 the Moscow province, including the capital, produced 66.9 per cent of the woollen products and 51.6 per cent of the total cotton goods in the USSR, the next centre, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, producing only 36.6 per cent of cotton products and virtually no woollens.<sup>68</sup> Over half the workers in the capital were employed in the textile industry, many of them in large plants, such as Trekhgornaya Manufaktura in Krasnaya Presnya *raion*, which employed 6600 workers in 1926.<sup>69</sup> More enterprises, such as Glukhovskaya Manufaktura and the Ramenskaya Fabrika, were sited in the countryside beyond the city, mainly employing women from surrounding villages.

By 1929 the predominance of the textile industry had come to be regarded as a liability in Moscow. Textiles were not viewed as a priority industry in the first Five Year Plan, which attached the greatest importance to heavy industry, 'the production of the means of production'. Moreover, the textile industry relied too heavily on imported cotton at a time when scarce hard currency was being concentrated on engineering imports. Even before the adoption of the plan, however, political attitudes among textile workers, including their reluctance to join the Communist Party, had begun to give rise to concern about the industry for other reasons. After 1929 its importance in Moscow relative to industries like metals and chemicals declined steeply (see Table I.3).

After textiles came the various metalworking industries, accounting in 1927 for about 15 per cent of Moscow's workers. This branch of industry, together with heavy industry generally, was to be one of the growth areas of the next decade. The characteristic small workshops,

Table I.3 Capital investment (at current prices) in Moscow industries, 1928-32

Branch of industry	Investment (thousands of rubles)			
	1927/28	1928/29	1932	1928- 1 Jan. 1933
Total in Moscow	83 373.1	118 818.0	455 861.3	1 147 218.3
Of which group A	56 965.6	75 981.9	395 963.5	943 523.9
Of which group B	26 407.5	42 836.1	59 897.8	203 694.4
<i>Main branches</i>				
Electricity stations	8 416.5	3 841.8	25 508.6	45 376.9
Fuel industry	147.9	177.3	6 807.5	30 290.0
Metalworking	26 638.0	37 253.0	261 353.3	595 024.4
Of which machine-building	17 332.2	24 322.1	131 456.5	338 849.2
Electro-technical	7 962.3	12 372.2	49 881.2	119 271.3
Chemical	16 927.3	24 352.3	41 745.3	150 421.6
Production of building materials	953.7	3 414.7	14 194.6	29 746.9
Textiles	13 113.2	12 169.1	12 187.1	43 631.9
Food processing	4 779.2	12 768.3	23 783.2	65 078.3
Refrigerators	—	183.0	291.0	939.0

Source: *Moskva v tsifrakh*, pp. 48-9.

employing skilled labour, were replaced by large plants where new workers predominated and skill levels were lower than in other industries, including textiles.<sup>70</sup> The value of output from the Moscow metal industry rose from 201 824 000 rubles in 1927/28 to 1 206 857 000 rubles in 1932.<sup>71</sup> The proportion of heavy industry as a whole rose from 28.3 per cent of output in Moscow in 1927/28 to 48.2 per cent in 1932.<sup>72</sup> Metalworking factories in Moscow which featured regularly in the press included *Serp i Molot*, a giant steelworks in Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raion*, which employed 4868 workers in 1926, *Krasnyi Proletarii*, a metalworking and machine tool factory in *Zamoskvorech'e raion*, and *Dinamo*, an engineering works in *Bauman raion*. Allied to the metal industry, the automobile industry in Moscow, which included the first car plant in the USSR, the AMO works,<sup>73</sup> expanded rapidly after 1929.

Other growth areas in these years were the construction and transport sectors. Construction workers were often 'seasonal' employees, dividing their time between the city and the countryside. Transport workers, the railway workers and tram drivers, began to figure regularly in the press after 1931, when it was maintained that inefficient transport accounted for many of the bottlenecks in Soviet production. Both groups were notoriously independent when it came to political activism, and included more than the average proportion of 'backward elements' such as alcoholics, anti-Semites and religious believers.<sup>74</sup>

In a country dedicated to the eradication of private capital, the individual craftsmen (*kustari*) and more particularly the small but often flamboyant capitalist class gave rise to considerable official concern. Their numbers were impossible to assess, since many were vagrants or members of the 'declassed' bourgeoisie, reduced to scratching a living by selling any goods or skills they had. A 1929 report found 125 000 people living in Moscow who were from social groups 'deprived of voting rights'. Of these, 'several thousand' were *Nepmen*, the private capitalists whose livelihoods depended on the relatively liberal conditions prevailing under the New Economic Policy, 19 500 were private traders, 8670 lived on unearned income, 8000 were priests, 2500 *Tsarist* policemen and roughly 10 000 were *kustari*.<sup>75</sup> Private industry was easier to investigate than the rest of the private sector. Although its share of the workforce was very small compared with that of state-owned industries, it provoked a number of official surveys in the 1920s. A 1926 survey for the party journal *Bol'shevik* found that the number of privately-owned enterprises in the capital was growing and that workers in the private sector earned more on average than those in the employ of the state. More alarming from the official point of view was the

'political level' of these workers. Religious festivals were still observed in private establishments, trade unions were weak and party membership was as little as 15 per cent of the average in state enterprises.<sup>76</sup> Attempts were made throughout the 1920s to bring workers in this sector into the official fold,<sup>77</sup> but it was only after 1929, when a new regime in the capital declared war upon the Nepmen, that the problem, from the Bolsheviks' point of view, was finally resolved.

For workers of all kinds the scourge of the period was unemployment, which reached alarming levels in the 1920s.<sup>78</sup> In 1927 one industrial worker in four in Moscow was unemployed.<sup>79</sup> The problem was compounded by the 'regime of economy', a campaign launched in April 1926 aimed at cutting production costs. Migrant workers were especially liable to unemployment, although not all could register at labour exchanges.<sup>80</sup> Only in 1929 did the number of unemployed begin to fall substantially. Not only rapid industrialisation, but also the collectivisation of agriculture alleviated the problem in the cities,<sup>81</sup> and by 1930 unemployment had virtually disappeared, to be replaced by the labour shortage which has characterised the economy ever since.

After industrial workers, the most numerous social group in Moscow consisted of white-collar employees. Included here were employees in the various state bureaucracies (national, regional and local) and the managerial staff of enterprises. Official attitudes towards these people were ambivalent.<sup>82</sup> While their contribution was recognised, doubts remained about their loyalty to the revolution and to the Bolshevik regime. Until 1929 the majority of civil servants, except at the highest levels, were ex-employees of the Tsarist government.<sup>83</sup> Most technical specialists and industrial managers had been trained under Tsarism. The conflict of priorities between the need for new, proletarian cadres and the continuing shortage of specialists was not resolved in our period, although wide-ranging changes between 1928 and 1931 greatly reduced the power of the older generation.

All these changes put a considerable strain on the city's leadership. Rapid growth and changes in the pattern of life in the city created turmoil, social and political, at all levels. Some changes were initiated by the political leadership – collectivisation, for example (which was particularly traumatic in the Moscow province), and the accelerated expansion of heavy industry. But others, such as the growth of the migrant and seasonal labour force and indeed the expansion in the city's total population, were often beyond official control. Deteriorating living conditions or shifts in the patterns of employment of Moscow's population, tensions between established social groups and newcomers

with different needs, resistance, however disorganised, to unpopular norm-raising or wage-cutting policies – all these problems affected party members as well as the mass of the population. Although many of its senior officials were not Muscovites, the Moscow party was not separate from society, and the pressures of life in Moscow provided the framework within which, whatever its long-term doctrinaire aspirations or the orders of its national masters, it had to work.

# Part 1

## Political Change in Moscow, 1925–32

Moscow's political history in the period from 1925 to 1932 was a turbulent one, reflecting the protracted struggles over policy and leadership in the Politburo. An economic and social crisis of unprecedented proportions provided the context. Even before 1914, Russia had been underdeveloped by European standards, despite progress in a few specific areas. Appalling damage, both economic and demographic, was caused by the First World War. The Civil War and allied interventions compounded the problems of rural poverty, the dissolution of the proletariat, economic collapse. In addition, the new regime had few foreign allies and a large number of powerful enemies in the capitalist world. The Bolsheviks' promises of 1917 could not be honoured in the short term. Even the immediate needs of the urban workforce – for bread, accommodation, firewood – were difficult to satisfy. The ruthless intensity of Bolshevik party debates in the 1920s was fuelled by the fear that major strategic errors could lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Problems like these would have strained more resilient and experienced governments. The Bolsheviks' survival in power was proof of remarkable tenacity. Their problems, however, were compounded by their weaknesses and contradictions as a party. Among these, their ambiguous attitude towards policy debates, largely a legacy from their pre-revolutionary history, gave rise to confusion and periodic arbitrariness. As in 1917, the banner under which they marched was one of triumphant unity. But discussion was essential if the unimagined problems of the post-war period were to be tackled. There was no 'general line' before 1929. In the early 1920s debates about specific issues were conducted in public, and even included the lower levels of the party. 'We were moving towards a single goal for the first time, on a still unblazed trail,' explained one participant. '*Pravda* carried a discussion page, everyone argued, searched for ways and means, quarrelled and made up and moved on together.'<sup>1</sup>

Disunity and insubordination, however, were regarded as weaknesses. The boundary between healthy debate and factionalism was volatile.

As early as 1921 the party resolved that factional activity could not be tolerated. 'In order to ensure strict discipline within the party and in all soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity in removing all factionalism,' ran the seventh clause of the 1921 resolution on the Workers' Opposition, 'the [tenth] Congress authorizes the Central Committee, in cases where discipline has been broken or factionalism revived or tolerated, to apply all party penalties, including expulsion ....'<sup>2</sup> This ban was a significant step in the direction of authoritarian rule. But its wording was sufficiently vague, and the seriousness of its intention little enough tested, for factional activity to continue thereafter.<sup>3</sup> It took another decade to establish what the party's practice would be. The tension between necessary exchanges of view and party unity was ultimately resolved in favour of the latter. But even under Stalin the facade of unity concealed debates and uncertainty. Because its goals remained elusive, the party continued to stumble from crisis to crisis. Triumphalist rhetoric was used to paper over the gaps between reality and official promises.

The first major conflict after 1921 was between the Politburo majority and a Left coalition broadly identified with Trotsky. Reprisals against this movement were directed mainly at its base, the workers and students who had taken to the streets in 1923 to demonstrate against the party leadership. Many were exiled, others subjected to periodic police harassment. But Trotsky himself, although relieved of his post of Commissar for War, remained in the Central Committee. A further element was added in 1925, when Kamenev and Zinoviev moved into opposition. Despite Zinoviev's attempt to use the Leningrad party, which he headed, as a power base, this group was also defeated. Accordingly the two factions, Trotskyist and Zinovievist, joined forces in 1926 to form the 'United Opposition'.

The majority's campaign against the Trotskyist and United Oppositions involved significant redefinitions of the rules of political engagement. Both opposition groups attempted, for example, to circulate 'platforms', policy documents aimed at publicising their main criticisms and proposals. Both worked to mobilise supporters in the party rank and file, especially among students and factory workers. The majority's response to these campaigns was unambiguous; printing presses were seized, speakers at factional meetings investigated by the GPU, and ultimately the leaders of the movement were relieved of their national offices. Trotsky and several of his colleagues were exiled. Kamenev and Zinoviev spent several years in the wilderness before they were permitted to return to minor political posts.

Stalin was not uniquely responsible for this growing authoritarianism. Even figures like Trotsky contributed to the atmosphere of intolerance, and where the leaders pointed, the middle-level officials followed, echoing in their resolutions the centre's calls for discipline. Both Left and Right made the same mistakes when it came to opposition. Zinoviev's denunciation of Trotsky in 1923 was fiercer than Stalin's. As Mikoyan remarked at the fourteenth Party Congress, 'When there is a majority for Zinoviev, he is for iron discipline, for subordination. When he has no majority ... he is against it.'<sup>4</sup> Trotsky in turn made no secret of his loathing for Zinoviev. When in opposition, too, the Trotsky–Zinoviev group often used the same extreme language as the Stalin–Bukharin majority, not seeking common ground with their opponents, but casting them as betrayers of Leninism.<sup>5</sup> Bukharin and Rykov, future victims of political repression, were among the first to anathematise the Left. Significantly, they did not examine its criticisms point by point, but dismissed the whole package as the work of anti-Soviet demagogues.<sup>6</sup> Those politicians, including Trotsky, who subsequently criticised Stalin for suppressing debate and removing opponents by underhand means, conveniently forgot their own contributions when in power.

By 1928 there was little room for accommodation between different factions. The expression of dissenting views, even within the context of overall loyalty to the party majority, was fraught with difficulties. The Right, which emerged in 1928, was reluctant to declare itself, reluctant even to admit that it was an opposition in fact. Most of its campaign was conducted behind the scenes. Although it continued to state its views on the economy, it sounded no alarms about Stalin's methods and failed to make a public link between its reservations about current economic problems and his proposed 'new course'. Even within the party, speakers used aesopian language, the full significance of which was only comprehensible to a small minority of the audience. Under these circumstances the victory of the Stalinist faction, which controlled the key posts in the apparatus, was seldom in doubt. Despite widespread sympathy for its position, the Right was isolated within two years. Stalin's fiftieth birthday in December 1929 saw the launch of a personality cult to rival Lenin's.

Why did the oppositions, headed as they were by politicians of national reputation, fail? And what sort of victory had the Stalinists secured by 1929? The study of Moscow politics suggests answers at several levels. Moscow was one of the country's key cities from the political point of view. Control of the capital had a number of specific



advantages. Moscow's was the largest party organisation in the country. Every local party had voting representatives on the Central Committee, but Moscow had the most, and also tended to take a larger share of places on the Orgburo<sup>7</sup> and other executive departments of the central party apparatus. Its propaganda value to any faction was enormous. As their local party organisation, the MK also had considerable influence over the work of various national and regional authorities, such as the Supreme Council for the National Economy (VSNKh), the People's Commissariats and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.<sup>8</sup> Senior politicians in the Moscow party organisation were people of influence, living and working cheek by jowl with their colleagues in the Politburo. Moreover, many national figures, including Molotov, Bukharin and Mikoyan, took a personal interest in the city's affairs.<sup>9</sup> All factions, including the majority, tried to establish themselves there, and the leaders of each faction became personally engaged in local campaigns. Nowhere were the range and effectiveness of their organisations and their own qualities as factional politicians more severely tested.

Another important aspect of the political campaigns of the 1920s was the interplay between the rank and file and local and national political elites. In Moscow's case the party mass was involved in major political debates at one or two key moments, but not continually throughout the period. Ordinary rank and filers routinely participated in discussions in the first years after the revolution. But after 1921 their influence was greatly reduced. The gap between the apparatus and the bulk of party members widened to a point where the two were virtually separate cultures. The Left's critiques of low wages, unemployment and the relative position of workers and peasants within the economy struck resonances among the cadre workers who made up the backbone of the Moscow party in the early 1920s. But no Bolshevik opposition after 1921 included soviet democracy in its programme, with the result that political struggles took on the appearance of internal squabbles within the elite. 'They say a lot about opportunists,' remarked a Moscow factory worker in 1930, 'but it's not clear to me what they mean. Someone ought to explain it in Russian. In my opinion, the struggle ... is a struggle for a portfolio.'<sup>10</sup>

The effects of the elite's unwavering commitment to Bolshevik party rule should not be underestimated. While it would be a mistake to attribute to them goals peculiar to the Western democratic tradition, cadre workers still aspired to influence a political process which ostensibly operated on their behalf. For those who had been active

during the revolution, the idea of a single, highly centralised and unified party (however unattainable this was in fact) was a disappointment, especially as their original allegiance had been divided between a number of Marxist and other Left-wing groups. Increasingly after the Civil War and the defeat of the Workers' Opposition, the mass of the party rank and file, including many new recruits, came for various reasons to reject opposition movements on principle. But those who still accepted the desirability of debate, and these were the only people who could have supported the oppositions of the later 1920s, tended to think in terms of an end to the more repressive features of 'democratic centralism', as well as demanding that the voice of the working class be heard on bread and butter issues like wages and conditions.<sup>11</sup>

The other reason for the rank and file's reduced importance was the official insistence on party discipline. Open support for Bolshevik oppositions required a positive act of defiance on the part of rank and filers, and the risks this entailed – including the possibility of expulsion from the party, loss of privileges like housing, and later the unwelcome attentions of the GPU – generally outweighed the attractions of the opposition programmes. This tendency to discipline was reinforced with each opposition defeat, as the penalties became greater and more automatic and the habit of Bolshevik discipline more ingrained. And although the Left Opposition claimed to be sensitive to workers' grievances, the effect of its isolation was to turn it into a scapegoat in many people's minds. The more disappointments – about failures in foreign policy, rising unemployment, goods shortages and the extinction of soviet democracy – piled up, the more vulnerable became any group which could plausibly be blamed for betraying the Revolution.<sup>12</sup> By 1925, too, many of the people who could have challenged this version of politics had been exiled from Moscow. Their departure removed many of the Left's most experienced and committed activists, while also serving as a warning to others.

The rapid growth in party membership also affected the relationship between the Bolshevik elite and the rank and file. It has been suggested that the result was that the 'conscious' proletarian party core was drowned by a flood of 'the politically immature, the backward, the dull-minded and the nest-featherers'.<sup>13</sup> But this is an unjustified exaggeration. It is true that during the Lenin enrolment, when over 25 000 new members joined the Moscow organisation, many recruits were admitted for whom membership was a means – to better living conditions, improved career prospects, a chance to take part in local affairs – rather than an end in itself. But these people cannot be dismissed as 'a passive

mass, hissing and voting according to the orders of the bureaucracy'.<sup>14</sup> Speeches at mass meetings indicate that people's interest in political issues was genuine and sustained.<sup>15</sup> What changed was the amount of information about high politics to which they were given access.<sup>16</sup> In general, however, although they remained loyal to what they understood to be the party's overall goals, rank and filers gave wholehearted support to none of the Politburo factions. Bolshevik politics continued to be viewed, as it had from the early days of the Revolution, as a matter of 'us', the lower ranks of the party, against 'them', the '*verkhi*' or '*vlasti*' in positions of power. Although fear of the revival of a popular Left Bolshevik movement dogged successive MK secretaries until the end of the decade, the political arena was dominated by the apparatus.

Despite this, Bolshevik leaders continued to canvass the rank and file, and to regard their support as a weathercock. The spectre of organised insurrection haunted leaders into the early 1920s, giving an added importance to the question of support among the mass. Insurrection was no longer in fact a serious threat.<sup>17</sup> It is unlikely that any opposition leader after 1921 regarded armed struggle as the answer to the Soviet Union's political problems. Beyond insurrection, however, the Bolshevik Party's commitment to proletarian socialism meant that special significance was attached to workers' explicit support. And specific groups of workers, students or employees could often still be mobilised around issues such as piece work, raised norms or food shortages. Coalitions between elite factions and groups with special interests were constantly forming. The crucial question was how effective they could be in influencing the political process. The victory of the Stalinist clique in Moscow cannot be explained in terms of any one cause. It was the product of an interaction between local and central elites, specific elite factions, and alignments between groups beyond the party leadership, some of them outside the party altogether.

# 1 The Moscow Committee and the Left, 1925–7

The Bolshevik ‘Left’ was not one but several different political groups with varying priorities. Before the introduction of the NEP in 1921, there were two main tendencies, one anxious to assert the rights of the working class, mainly through the vehicle of the trade unions, and the other concerned to reverse the wider erosion of democracy. The banning of factions in 1921 made it more difficult for these groups to operate, but formal dissent in the party nonetheless persisted, and the early 1920s saw a succession of ‘platforms’ and open letters setting out alternative views on current issues. The question of democracy, now seen in terms of a struggle against the ‘bureaucracy’, continued to feature in the Left’s critique.<sup>18</sup> But increasingly the debate centred around the economy. The Left oppositions of the period after 1921 were consistent in their criticism of the concessions offered to the peasants, calling repeatedly for more rapid rates of industrialisation and better conditions for the working class. In addition they were impatient with current trends in foreign policy, arguing first for the export of revolution and later against the new slogan, introduced in 1924, of ‘socialism in one country’.<sup>19</sup>

Political disturbances in Moscow came to a head in 1923–4. Discontent again focused on workers’ poor living conditions, low wages and unemployment and the insensitive handling of these issues by party leaders and managers. ‘Not since the Kronstadt rising’, writes one historian, ‘had there been so much tension in the working class and so much alarm in ruling circles’.<sup>20</sup> A number of small groups flourished in Moscow’s factories, including the ‘Workers’ Group’ and ‘Workers’ Truth’, both of which encouraged the strike movement of the late summer of 1923.<sup>21</sup>

The situation also provoked criticism from members of the elite. Two documents appeared in October 1923, a letter from Trotsky criticising the economic and political situation,<sup>22</sup> and the ‘Platform of the 46’; signed the following week, which also covered these issues.<sup>23</sup> For constitutional reasons, Trotsky did not sign this document, but its supporters, and indeed most active critics of the leadership at the time, were nonetheless treated as ‘Trotskyists’.<sup>24</sup> This general label concealed the fact that many of those who opposed the leadership, including

supporters of 'Workers' Truth' and similar organisations, were not formally aligned with political groups in the Central Committee.

The various 'Left' groups attracted support in all areas of the capital in the last months of 1923. Soviet accounts of the period stress the 'petty-bourgeois' character of the movement, identifying the main Leftist strongholds as the institutes of higher education and government offices.<sup>25</sup> Contemporary sources suggest that the Leftists' most consistent supporters were indeed students and the young in general, their most solid base being Khamovniki *raion*, where most of the educational institutions were concentrated. Party cells in many educational establishments supported the Opposition in December 1924, attracted by the arguments against centralism and advocating a reversal of current economic policy in favour of the urban proletariat.<sup>26</sup> The opposition were less successful in recruiting among older workers, who were already asking what distinguished the various groups within the leadership, uncertain that anyone offered the kind of policy which could hold their allegiance.<sup>27</sup> Despite this, enthusiasm in some factories was considerable, and the picture of a movement supported only by 'non-proletarian' elements is exaggerated.<sup>28</sup>

The Left's most obvious weakness in Moscow was its lack of support in the party apparatus. At each successive layer in the party hierarchy, its strength dwindled. It could count on only eighteen supporters at the Moscow Party Conference,<sup>29</sup> and subsequent purges suggested that only two or three members of the Moscow Party's buro were involved. This was a crucial shortcoming, and it led to defeat at the thirteenth Party Conference as well as at the Moscow provincial Party Conference which preceded it.

The campaign of 1923–4 had lasting implications. The most important was the party leadership's continuing sensitivity to left-wing criticisms. The majority's victory did not solve underlying problems such as the party's relationship with the working class, the persistence of peasant landholding, and the growth of bureaucracy. The group within the Politburo which opposed Trotsky and his allies was not itself united, and its members were to revise their own policies on these questions in the next five years, sometimes more than once. Despite the boldness and dogmatism of its public slogans, the Bolshevik Party leadership in 1925 was not a united or self-confident body. Its approach to economic and political questions in the period after 1925 would be cautious and often defensive. The Moscow party organisation suffered from the same confusions, reinforced by the necessity to prove that the city's leadership could resist any further challenge from below. The Left's defeat was

followed by a purge in which I. A. Zelenskii, the Moscow party's first secretary, was replaced by the future Rightist Nikolai Aleksandrovich Uglanov.

Uglanov was born in 1886 in Yaroslavl'. Like many peasants in the late nineteenth century, Uglanov's father augmented the family's income by working in the city, in his case St Petersburg.<sup>30</sup> At the age of twelve Uglanov joined him in the capital as an apprentice metal-worker. He was only sporadically employed, returning often to the village between jobs, a record of unemployment which he blamed on his lack of patrons in the city. Experience helped to radicalise him, and in 1903, Nikolai Aleksandrovich joined the revolutionary movement, becoming a member of the Social Democratic party in 1907. His early revolutionary work included holding undergrounders' passports and passing on illegal literature. Later he worked as a correspondent for *Pravda*, where he met influential figures like Kamenev. He was arrested on the eve of the war, but soon after was released and sent to the front, where in November 1914 he was severely wounded. Back in Petrograd, he continued his revolutionary work. He participated in both revolutions as a member of the Petrograd Soviet. Thereafter he played a leading role in the affairs of the city, becoming the secretary of the Petrograd *guberniya* council of trades unions in 1919, and then, in February 1921, a secretary of the Petrograd *gubkom*. His part in the suppression of the Kronstadt mutiny in March earned him the Order of the Red Banner.

It is not clear why Uglanov left Petrograd, although the most likely reason was that he had quarrelled with Zinoviev, who was in charge of the Petrograd party organisation.<sup>31</sup> In 1922, he was moved to Nizhnii-Novgorod, where he spent two years as the secretary of the *uezd* party organization, before being brought to Moscow as the second secretary in August 1924, taking over as first secretary in October.<sup>32</sup> Despite the rumoured quarrel with Zinoviev, the story persists that Uglanov was picked for the Moscow job on Zinoviev and Kamenev's recommendation.<sup>33</sup> Even if this were true, it should not be taken to imply that he was their client at the time. Nor was he a Stalinist, either in 1924 or after some mysterious conversion early in 1925.<sup>34</sup> Politically he was closest to Bukharin, though the latter may not have been solely responsible for his appointment.

By the beginning of 1925 many of the Left Oppositionists had been removed from the Moscow party organisation. A purge in the spring of 1924 removed 22.2 per cent of party members, 2072 people, mostly from the institutions of higher education, where levels of purging ran as high as 29 per cent.<sup>35</sup> A speaker at the thirteenth Moscow Party

Conference in January 1925 reported that the problem of Trotskyism in such institutes was 'almost eliminated, at least, if not almost, then three quarters'.<sup>36</sup> After 1924 it is difficult to credit the Left with much committed grassroots support in Moscow. In 1926 one of their own partisans was to feel proud that they could muster as many as five hundred comrades.<sup>37</sup> This handful of genuine Trotskyists, retaining their links with the Left as a whole, were to be the organisers of Leftist activity at grass roots level in 1926 and 1927. But the majority of 'Trotskyists' discovered in the capital after 1925 were merely workers disillusioned with the circumstances of the time. Occasionally a so-called 'Leftist' might have read Opposition literature, often as part of a wider search for alternatives, but most had no organised link with Trotsky at all. As a party official in Krasnaya Presnya district explained, there was a distinction between the 'half-baked' kind of oppositionist, whose political discontent was the result of hardships, and the 'other type, who took an interest in a wider range of subjects'.<sup>38</sup>

If it was relatively simple to cripple the grassroots movement, purging the party apparatus was more difficult. Many leading Leftists, including Trotsky, continued to hold official positions, and as long as they did so, they could not at this stage be attacked in public.<sup>39</sup> One beneficiary of this discretion in Moscow was G. Ya. Belen'kii,<sup>40</sup> the Leftist secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, who remained in his post until 1926. But this kind of official caution did not prevent the capital from acquiring a reputation after 1925 as the staunchest supporter of the Politburo majority in its struggle against the Left.<sup>41</sup>

## THE 'NEW OPPOSITION' OF 1925

The first test of this loyalty was the well-publicised struggle between Zinoviev, Kamenev and their supporters in the Leningrad organisation on one hand, the so-called 'New Opposition',<sup>42</sup> and the rest of the Politburo on the other. The conflict resolved itself into a duel between the Moscow and Leningrad party committees, the only significant voice of dissent from the majority line in the capital being that of Lev Borisovich Kamenev, then chairman of the Moscow Soviet and a member of the MK buro.

Kamenev's political position was very similar to Zinoviev's in 1925. Indeed the two had often been regarded as a duo since 1917. As chairman of the Moscow Soviet, Kamenev did not bend with the changing political wind that blew through the capital after 1924. While the Moscow

organisation moved towards the right within the party, the New Opposition borrowed its political programme in large measure from the Trotskyists. The reason for the Opposition's policy shift was partly personal opposition to Stalin,<sup>43</sup> but also alarm at the Politburo majority's adoption of new, unprecedented policies in the winter of 1924–5. At a Politburo session in the summer, for example, Kamenev attacked the new slogan of 'Socialism in One Country',<sup>44</sup> arguing that Russia could not overcome her technological backwardness without assistance from a revolutionary Europe.<sup>45</sup> To this were added criticisms of the pro-peasant shift in agrarian policy, the management of industry and party democracy, although individual members of the Opposition disagreed about the priority to be given to specific issues.

It was in September 1925 that the Opposition's criticisms hardened into a clear programme. In Moscow the first expression of this came at a plenum of the MK on 4 September. Kamenev delivered a substantial report, criticising the official policy on industry and labour as 'state capitalism' and proposing a profit-sharing policy for industry, together with a general rise in wages of about 20 per cent for industrial workers. On the condition of the countryside, he argued that the kulak was growing more powerful, holding the regime to ransom by 'regulating' the collection of grain.<sup>46</sup> These criticisms and proposals were embodied in a document which came to be known as the 'Platform of the Four', signed the following day by Zinoviev, Kamenev, Krupskaya and Sokol'nikov.<sup>47</sup> Although the document is not available, its contents may be inferred from the authors' statements and must have included the points referred to above. Zinoviev's influence in Leningrad, combined with the enthusiasm of many Leningraders for the detailed proposals, ensured the Opposition considerable support in the Leningrad Party Committee, but Uglanov's Moscow was less amenable. Kamenev was isolated in the capital, and the differences between the Bukharin-Stalin groups and the New Opposition crystallised into a battle of words between the Leningrad and Moscow party organisations.

The debate was fuelled by the rivalry between the two cities,<sup>48</sup> but substantial points were at issue. The solidarity of the Moscow leadership and the policies which it defended indicate how far it moved away from its Leftism of the early 1920s. From the spring of 1925 an identifiable 'Moscow line' developed,<sup>49</sup> repeatedly outlined in Uglanov's speeches and propagated more widely by his colleagues in the party agitation and propaganda department. This line was to dominate Moscow politics until the autumn of 1928, and was characterised by its emphasis on gradual, 'balanced' economic development along the lines advocated



by Bukharin. Specific importance would later be given to the development of existing light industries, which in Moscow's case meant textiles. In 1925, however, the central issues in the anti-Left campaign were party recruitment and agricultural policy.

The 'Moscow line' on recruitment advocated the 'proletarianisation' of the party while calling for circumspection in the selection of candidates. The official goal of recruitment policy until 1933 was to achieve a party membership half of which would consist of 'workers from the bench' (see Chapter 6). In Moscow this presented particular problems. First, the presence of so many bureaucracies in the city – national, regional and local – meant that a high proportion of party members were bound to be white-collar workers. Moreover, as the demand for new administrators sympathetic to the Revolution increased, many people originally recruited as workers were drafted into the state apparatus. Second, the predominant industry in Moscow was textiles, and many of the largest factories were situated in the countryside and employed a considerable number of women, a group, as the 1927 party census explained, which was 'more backward than men, more difficult to involve in political life'.<sup>50</sup> A larger proportion of workers in Moscow than in Leningrad had entered industry in the years since the Revolution, and these, as well as some of the older generation, retained their 'links with the countryside'. Even if they had been anxious to join the party, which most were not, there were doubts about these people's suitability for membership at this stage. At the fourteenth Moscow Party Conference in December 1925, a delegate from the Kolomenskoe factory, one of the largest textile works in the province, pointed out that 80 per cent of the workforce there was composed of peasants. If recruitment continued, he added, 'we shall not have a working-class cell, but a peasant cell, in our enterprise'.<sup>51</sup>

For these reasons there were proportionately more workers in the Leningrad than in the Moscow party throughout the period (see Table 1.1). Repeated reference to this fact was made by the Leningraders during the confrontation of 1925. Leningrad, which had been the cradle of the Revolution, posed as the true defender of the Russian proletariat against the 'state capitalist' and pro-peasant capital. The same kind of argument was used in the debate about the countryside. Moscow's line was drawn from Bukharin and emphasised the need to conciliate the peasant, even to the point of allowing the kulak to prosper, in order that the economy should grow on the basis of a flourishing agriculture. In their defence of peasant prosperity, Bukharin and the Moscow ideologues went further than the more cautious Stalin. The most famous

*Table 1.1 Composition of Moscow and Leningrad party organisations in 1925*

<i>Social situation</i>	<i>Moscow (%)</i>	<i>Leningrad (%)</i>
Workers	71	74
Peasants	5	14.5
White-collar workers	24	11.5

*Source:* Moscow figures from *Izvestiya TsK*, 1925, nos 43–4; Leningrad figures from D.A. Hughes, 'Zinoviev, the Leningrad Party Organisation and the 1925 Opposition', unpublished MSocSci dissertation (University of Birmingham, 1977).

instance of this was Bukharin's call to the peasants to 'enrich themselves', made in the spring of 1925.<sup>52</sup> Although hastily retracted, this slogan, which Bukharin was prepared to defend in essence even after he had apologised for it, was used by the Left to attack the Bukharinist tendency. At the time, however, it was the Bukharinists whose views most closely coincided with those of the party majority. Claiming as they did that the kulak was holding the Revolution to ransom and must be suppressed, the New Opposition sounded more like the old Left.<sup>53</sup>

The crisis broke at the conferences of the Moscow and Leningrad organisations, held in November and December 1925. The Leningrad conference opened first, and was marked by some outspoken speeches from the floor criticising Bukharin and his policies.<sup>54</sup> The Moscow conference, beginning on 5 December, was the scene of some of the most bitter debate in the whole episode. But much of it failed to reach the national press. Only the Moscow newspapers reveal how openly Kamenev was prepared to discuss his personal and political differences with the Bolshevik majority, and how thorough was the Moscow party's resistance. The main reports at the conference were restrained,<sup>55</sup> but the debate soon gave way to open criticism of the Leningraders. Contributors to the discussion between them attacked every plank of the Opposition platform, from the kulak danger to recruitment, wages and the future of NEP.<sup>56</sup> Bukharin himself made an aggressive speech, heavily larded with insults, which revealed a personal dislike for Zinoviev as well as a contempt for his policies. Zinoviev was accused

of ‘prattle’, and his study of Leninism was dismissed as the work of a man who knew nothing either of current policy or of Leninism. The country, Bukharin said, needed a united working class and a united party, and he implied that many of its difficulties had been exacerbated by the factional activities of the Leningrad organisation. After the trouble over his ‘enrich yourselves’ slogan of the previous spring, Bukharin was prepared to recognise the ‘kulak danger’, but he still insisted that the formation of agricultural co-operatives was taking the country forward to socialism. The accusation that NEP was a form of ‘state capitalism’ he dismissed as ‘Menshevism of the purest water.’<sup>57</sup>

Kamenev’s was the only dissenting voice of any consequence at the Moscow conference.<sup>58</sup> Although he was isolated in Moscow, he was still important enough to make a long speech criticising the majority’s line. Where Bukharin had only hinted that his target was Zinoviev, Kamenev named his adversary, telling Bukharin to his face that he was the only person who did not understand Leninism. Once again, he set out the New Opposition’s line on the kulak, remarking that it was a good thing for Bukharin that he had already taken back his ‘enrich yourselves’ exhortation. In defence of the Leningrad organisation, he told the conference that he had scoured *Leningradskaya Pravda* for evidence of a breach of party discipline, but had found nothing except approval for the activities of the Central Committee.<sup>59</sup>

Despite Kamenev’s intervention, the final resolution of the Moscow conference, while mentioning no one by name, clearly favoured Moscow’s political bias. The resolution, together with the generally belligerent tone of the Moscow conference, provoked a reply from Leningrad in the form of an open letter.<sup>60</sup> Leningrad answered Moscow point by point,<sup>61</sup> identifying five major charges which had been laid at Zinoviev’s door and setting out to show that no major differences in fact existed between the Moscow and Leningrad organisations.<sup>62</sup> Moscow replied at even greater length, re-examining each of the five points and adding a few extra remarks for good measure.<sup>63</sup>

It was in this atmosphere that the fourteenth Party Congress opened on 18 December 1925. The New Opposition could count on about 65 votes to the majority’s 550 or more, a hopeless minority but nonetheless a determined one.<sup>64</sup> This was to be the last Party Congress at which any opposition group secured a vote. Stalin gave the main report on behalf of the Central Committee, but Zinoviev made a co-report, the last oppositionist to do so at a Party Congress. Although restrained in general, he used the opportunity to deliver another broadside against the majority’s peasant policy, and against Bukharin in particular. The

most outspoken, and indeed the most competent, contribution by a member of the Opposition, however, came from Kamenev, whose speech of 21 December contained an unprecedented attack on Stalin. 'We cannot regard it as normal', he declared, 'and we think it harmful to the party, to prolong a situation in which the secretariat combines politics and organisation, and in fact decides policy in advance .... I have reached the conclusion that Comrade Stalin cannot perform the function of uniting the Bolshevik general staff.'<sup>65</sup>

Kamenev's views must have met with the sympathy of many of his hearers, but his boldness could not secure the New Opposition's success. As he had indicated, the Party Congress had become a tool of the secretariat, and the opposition could not hope to raise a majority. The fourteenth Congress was to witness their defeat. It was followed by the denunciation of Kamenev in Moscow<sup>66</sup> and his removal from the presidency of the Council for Labour and Defence, STO.<sup>67</sup> The following April he was removed from his Moscow Soviet post. The resolution of the fourth MK plenum explained that

The great growth in the work of the Moscow Soviet demands the constant participation and leadership of its work by the chairman, and in view of the fact that Comrade Kamenev has taken virtually no part in the work of Mossoviet, and because of the necessity of promoting new people, especially workers, the buro of the MK has decided to relieve Comrade Kamenev from his responsibilities as chairman of the Moscow Soviet and *gubispolkom* and to replace him with Ukhanov.<sup>68</sup>

Such a dismissal, containing no mention of the victim's 'own request' and no reference to his valuable work in the post, was only one degree short of complete disgrace.

Many of the issues raised by the New Opposition were intended to have popular appeal, particularly where wages and working conditions were concerned. However, their impact in Moscow, as opposed to Leningrad, where a purge followed the fourteenth Congress,<sup>69</sup> was slight. Neither Kamenev nor Zinoviev was a popular figure in Moscow politics, and from the start there had been no campaign among the party rank and file in the capital.<sup>70</sup> Contemporary sources, whether compiled by the Trotskyists or under the control of the Central Committee majority, do not give a clear picture of the extent of support for the Opposition in Moscow, but a report of January 1926 from one Moscow factory may have been typical. The interest aroused by the fourteenth Congress, it claimed, was limited. 'Over there,' said one

worker, 'they had their argument, but in the end they'll work out a resolution and will get on with their work in peace again.' Some workers admitted to the reporter that they sympathised with the Opposition line about the exploitation of the proletariat, but not to the extent that they would support Zinoviev and Kamenev. It was not thought surprising that these two should have been in opposition, though Krupskaya's position was unexpected. Sympathetically, one respondent remarked that she must have found it difficult to think about things without Lenin's guidance, and thus had fallen into one or two errors.<sup>71</sup>

The discontents of the city's population thus failed to give rise to open support for the Opposition in 1925. If anything, the Moscow party organisation proved to be more royalist than the king in this debate. The campaign of 1925, however, was not a real test of popular feeling in Moscow, confined as it was the party elite. It was in the next two years that the level of support for the Left was really to be put to the test, and in circumstances which looked very bleak for the party majority.

The winter of 1925–6 brought severe problems. Attempts at cutting production costs and raising productivity had direct effects on wages, working hours and unemployment. Stepanov, the director of the *Serp i Molot* factory, described later how when he joined the factory in 1925, collective agreements were being concluded between management and workers which provided for average cuts in wage of 13 per cent, rising to 23 per cent in some shops.<sup>72</sup> Workers' conditions had become such an embarrassment to the leadership by February 1926 that the deliberations of the MK plenum which discussed them were kept secret.<sup>73</sup> From February the MK embarked on a programme of 'explanatory work' in the capital,<sup>74</sup> and in April a further plenum examined the mood of the Moscow proletariat. In his report Uglanov optimistically claimed that 'the problems which we are living through' had been 'considerably more acute two or three months ago', although they were still a cause for concern, with dissatisfaction particularly serious among unskilled and semi-skilled workers.<sup>75</sup> Thereafter, however, the workers' difficulties were further compounded by the introduction of the 'regime of economy', which led to cuts in wages and extensive job losses in all sectors of Soviet industry. In August an MK closed letter describing the problems, marked 'absolutely secret', was circulated among Moscow party cells. It referred, among other things, to mistakes associated with the regime of economy, such as the 'inaccurate payment of wages' in some enterprises, to the 'unstable mood of the workers', which had reached a peak of dissatisfaction in the spring, and to rising

unemployment, and it noted that the opposition had been gaining ground as a result of these ‘difficulties’.<sup>76</sup>

Support for the opposition was not the only fruit of these problems. Another direct result was the growth of ‘*khuliganstvo*’ in the capital, in the form both of individual petty crime and, more disturbingly, of group attacks on party meetings, club houses and workers’ correspondents in factories.<sup>77</sup> Unrest arising from hard living conditions often manifested itself in complete disenchantment with all political groups. To the Left Opposition, however, the mood of the working class looked like a vindication of their criticisms; moreover, it provided them with an opportunity too attractive to ignore. From April 1926, the defeated groups of Trotskyists and Zinovievists combined to form the ‘United Opposition’. For the next two years, they were to mount a comprehensive critique of party policy. The main forum for their efforts, outside the Central Committee, was the Moscow party organisation.

#### THE UNITED OPPOSITION, 1926–7

The first shots in the new campaign were fired in April 1926 at a Central Committee plenum. Although the policies of the two disaffected leaders, Trotsky and Zinoviev, were now closer to each other than to the Stalin–Bukharin group, the Trotskyists had held back from an alliance with their old adversaries, and at one stage had even considered the idea of an alliance with the Stalinists against Zinoviev.<sup>78</sup> Only the continued campaign by the centre against the Left forced the Trotskyists belatedly to identify their common enemy.<sup>79</sup> Whatever the tactics of the leadership, moreover, Trotsky’s rank and file supporters continued to mistrust the Zinovievists, so that the group lacked cohesion.<sup>80</sup> Its individual members held very different views about how to solve Russia’s economic and political problems. Three major policy documents, including attacks on the majority’s turn to the right and the growth of party bureaucracy, were produced in the course of 1926–7. But the United Opposition remained open to the criticism that it was devoted primarily to replacing the personnel at the top, and riven beneath with differences on the important question of what to do thereafter.<sup>81</sup>

Opposition activity also revived in Moscow in the spring. The MK’s solidarity was now beyond question, but the Left still had hopes of attracting support at the grassroots level. Initially they focused on the workers’ conferences being held to discuss and explain current policy in the factories. Part of the purpose of these conferences was to counter

the Left's claims about the economy by clarifying the official line, but the opportunity was ideal for an opposition group. At open meetings of workers, often at the shop level and not attended by eminent speakers from the MK, oppositionists put their views unchecked. Opposition speeches were made in Sokol'niki, Khamovniki, Zamoskvorech'e and Bauman *raions*. 'The Opposition is trying to make demagogic speeches about wages, about the building of houses and other questions of daily life among the unconscious party mass', ran a report from the Klara Tsetkin factory, adding, however, that 'the party has grown since 1923, it knows how to understand questions, and the Opposition has not broken its ranks. We only rally more closely around the Central Committee, our leader.' This claim was probably false; the Klara Tsetkin factory was a stronghold of the Democratic Centrist group, generally allies of Trotsky, until the end of 1927.<sup>82</sup>

The height of this phase of the Opposition's activities came in the summer of 1926. On 6 June a meeting, organised by Belen'kii, was held in woods near the Dolgorupaya railway station, 39 kilometres from Moscow. It was addressed by the Oppositionist deputy Commissar for War, Lashevich.<sup>83</sup> About seventy invited people attended.<sup>84</sup> The Opposition also aimed to organise groups of supporters in as many factories and institutions as possible. However, although they were able to attract small groups of workers, particularly in the larger factories, they were more successful in the VUZy and the government institutions.<sup>85</sup> Their greatest numerical strength was reportedly in Sokol'niki *raion*, where a number of state institutions were concentrated.<sup>86</sup> But even here they were far from secure, and the commitment of many of their sympathisers was unreliable. They made much more noise in Moscow than their numbers warranted. Even their leaders were aware that there was little chance of success, however limited. Perhaps they hoped that the discussion of policy issues by Oppositionists in the cells might build up a climate of opinion in which the centre would be unable to persist with its current strategy. Possibly, too, silence would have been intolerable. As one of their activists put it, 'even if there were only one chance in a hundred for regenerating the Revolution and its workers' democracy, that chance had to be taken at all costs'.<sup>87</sup>

The leadership responded by intensifying its campaign against the Left. A Central Committee resolution in July dismissed Zinoviev from the Politburo and deprived Lashevich of his candidate membership of the Central Committee.<sup>88</sup> A propaganda campaign followed in Moscow, including a meeting of the Moscow party *aktiv*, attended by 4200 members, at which a resolution was passed condemning the 'Trotsky-

Zinoviev bloc'.<sup>89</sup> Throughout the summer of 1926, the Moscow press carried articles exposing Oppositionist groups in the capital and repeating the official message that the Opposition was fighting a lost cause against the united proletariat.

The seventh MK plenum in September was largely devoted to the Opposition question. To a certain extent the leadership were necessarily on the defensive. The regime of economy continued to bring hardship to the city in a variety of ways. For example, cuts in the demand for paper from government departments had led to growing unemployment among print-workers,<sup>90</sup> traditionally an articulate group with little sympathy for the Bolsheviks. Other sources of grievance included wage levels and rent increases, both problems to which the Opposition proposed attractive solutions. In his report on the conduct of the regime of economy, Savvat'ev, the chairman of the Moscow Control Commission (MCK), emphasised the need for wages to be kept at reasonable levels and for cuts to come from other spheres, especially reductions in the size of middle and senior management and in the party apparatus.<sup>91</sup> Uglanov, who gave the main report to the plenum, again warned his audience that the Opposition were drawing strength from current hardships, illustrating his point with reference to a meeting of eleven Oppositionists held in Sokol'niki *raion*, and to the discovery of illegal printing machinery in a private flat.<sup>92</sup>

Soviet sources claim that the Opposition were sanguine about their prospects in this climate. Belen'kii, the former secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, is said to have believed that the Opposition could count on 62 party cells there, and to have declared that 'if we can take Krasnaya Presnya, we can take everything'. Trotsky is reported to have said in September that he 'could take the Moscow heights in two weeks'.<sup>93</sup> Any hopes raised by such statements were soon to be dashed, however. On 1 October the Opposition attempted to take over a meeting of the factory cell at the Aviapribor factory, which had been a Trotskyist stronghold in 1923.<sup>94</sup> All their most prominent speakers attended, including Trotsky, Zinoviev, Pyatakov, Smilga and Radek. The meeting, to which Uglanov was hastily summoned, lasted until four in the morning, and the discussion must have been lively, but the Opposition were eventually defeated by 27 votes to 78 on the final resolution.<sup>95</sup> Although that was not a discreditable result in the circumstances of 1926, it was a turning point for the Left, and provided ammunition for a relentless campaign against the Opposition which continued into 1927.

The failure at Aviapribor, and a similar rebuff for Zinoviev at a meeting in Leningrad, contributed to the Opposition's decision to



refrain from 'factional activity' from October 1926 onwards. Their self-denying declaration appeared in the press on 17 October.<sup>96</sup> At the fifteenth Party Conference, which met at the end of the month, they spoke on economic issues, but there was none of the outspoken personal criticism of the previous December. It was not until the spring of 1927 that the Opposition returned to the centre of the political stage.

The lull in factional activity between October 1926 and April 1927 did not mean that the Moscow party leadership lapsed into complacency about the issue, however. Almost all areas of its work were affected by the struggle against the Left. Whether or not it threatened the majority's hold on the capital, the Opposition succeeded in forcing a debate about the party's record since 1921. In December 1926 and early January 1927, local party conferences were convened in the six *raions* to prepare for the Moscow Party Conference. Reports in *Pravda* and *Rabochaya Moskva* indicate that the Opposition issue dominated the discussions. The main speakers devoted most of their time to rebutting Opposition criticisms of current policy. Uglanov's report to the Krasnaya Presnya party organisation dealt with the question of wages, the problem of private capital, the importance of which he claimed was diminishing, and the existence of a large and growing *aktiv*, which he used as an indicator of the healthy state of intra-party democracy.<sup>97</sup> He also mentioned the Opposition, attempting to minimise its prestige by alleging that its activities were restricted to 'peripheral cells in the *guberniya*'.<sup>98</sup> The question of the Opposition was raised at all the local conferences, and reportedly dominated the questions submitted by the rank and file.

Neither side believed that the 'truce' between the Opposition and the Centre would last. Later in the month *Izvestiya Tsentral'nogo Komiteta* noted that the Moscow organisation had supplied only 60 per cent of its quota of the cadres to be sent into the countryside on party work. The reason given was that valuable party supporters could not be spared at this critical time.<sup>99</sup> The Opposition, too, were not entirely silent in Moscow or even confined to remote areas. In February 1927 speeches by Oppositionists were reported in the party cells of major factories like Trud and Serp i Molot, and in the cell of the Artamonovskii trampark. With this excuse the *raion* committees intensified their agitation campaign against the Opposition at once.<sup>100</sup>

In May the Opposition returned to open attack. Responding to the USSR's worsening international position, and in particular to the tragic consequences of the Central Committee's Chinese policy, the Opposition issued a formal condemnation of the majority line, denouncing 'socialism

in one country' as petty bourgeois, and calling for 'a Marxist analysis of the real situation of the proletarian dictatorship in the USSR.'<sup>101</sup> In Moscow reaction to the 'platform of the Eighty-Three' was swift, with local cells denouncing the Opposition as 'a worse threat than Chamberlain' and calling for their ejection from the party.<sup>102</sup> But rank and file demonstrations of solidarity with the Stalinist leadership could not conceal the fact that the defeat of the Chinese proletariat had aroused widespread concern.<sup>103</sup> Whether or not that was the same as support for the Opposition, the latter were encouraged in their campaign. Evidence suggests that although the total was small, the Opposition had a more substantial following in Moscow in 1927 than in any other local organisation.<sup>104</sup> A large demonstration accompanied Smilga's departure for Khabarovsk in June, with students choking the platform at the Yaroslavl' station and Trotsky and Zinoviev addressing the multitude.<sup>105</sup> But the crowd included very few workers. Despite their attempts to win support in the factories, the Opposition could count on few proletarian votes. Repulsed by the party apparatus, which seemed virtually united against them, the Opposition took their cause to the lowest levels in the party, addressing cell meetings in all the capital's *raions*.<sup>106</sup> The extent of active support for them was minimal, however, and they were heckled, shouted down and even occasionally attacked physically.<sup>107</sup>

It was in October that Trotsky and Zinoviev were finally expelled from the Central Committee. Many charges were laid at their door, including conspiracy to found a new party.<sup>108</sup> The timing of their removal – at the Central Committee meeting of 21–3 October – was intended to prevent disruptions from the Opposition at the fifteenth Party Congress, scheduled for December 1927. The session which approved their expulsion was febrile, with unedifying displays of violence from the floor. 'There was a morbid tenseness in the air', wrote one of Trotsky's biographers, 'such as might be felt at an execution where hangman and accomplices view their victim with deep hatred but also with deep awe and with gnawing uncertainty about the justice of the deed and the consequences.'<sup>109</sup> Trotsky and Zinoviev were both interrupted repeatedly, their voices drowned by shouts and the banging of clenched fists. While Trotsky was speaking, a glass and a heavy volume of control figures were thrown at his head.<sup>110</sup> Those who managed to listen to his speech would have heard refutations of the recent charges against him, and a warning about the future. He also referred to the remarks about Stalin in Lenin's 'Testament'. None of this altered his fate. Stalin, who 'alone spoke with self-possession, with

coarse and cold hatred and without any trace of a qualm',<sup>111</sup> even confirmed that Lenin had accused him of being 'rude', a strength, he claimed, when used 'in regard to those who rudely and treacherously destroy and split the party'.<sup>112</sup>

Abridged versions of the main speeches were printed in *Pravda* a week later.<sup>113</sup> But no references to the scandalous conduct of the Central Committee were made, and the Opposition leaders' criticisms were carefully censored. At the same time, *Pravda* gave a lot of space to reports of the Moscow *raion* meetings being held in advance of the fifteenth Congress. The Opposition question dominated the discussions on the first days of these meetings. Workers who took the floor often proposed their own solutions to the problem. According to a Krasnaya Presnya delegate, 'the Opposition say that we have no freedom. To their thinking, freedom only exists abroad. I propose that we should hand each of them a passport and send them packing ... and that on each railway carriage we should fix a board saying "'oppressed' people on their way to a free country"'.<sup>114</sup> At the same meeting the information that 150 Oppositionists had been expelled from the party was greeted with cries of 'few, few, very few!' Courage would indeed have been required to ask whether each of the charges against the Opposition was justified. Rank and filers were presented with a packaged image, and in view of all the circumstance – the risks of questioning it, the general lack of support for the Opposition, the need for a scapegoat for economic hardships and the benefits of siding with the party majority – most of them accepted it without question.

Nonetheless, the Opposition attempted one last appeal to the people. Demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad were organised to coincide with the official celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution.<sup>115</sup> The scale of these is difficult to measure, although no sources suggest that there was any threat to the Central Committee's overall control. The tenth anniversary of the Revolution was celebrated with street marches, including flag-waving and the shouting of slogans, and the Left's challenge amounted to a series of small-scale counter-demonstrations. Trotsky's supporters appeared among the crowd, some holding placards with counter-slogans, other shouting 'long live Trotsky'. They were set upon by the crowds before the official security agencies had the chance to intervene. Placards were torn to pieces, Oppositionist cheerleaders were shouted down or attacked, and Trotsky's car was hit by two revolver shots as it drove through a crowd.<sup>116</sup> Smilga and other Opposition leaders spoke from a balcony overlooking one of Moscow's main streets. But there were few people to listen to them. In

Leningrad Zinoviev narrowly escaped being beaten up by the crowd, and some of his supporters were indeed attacked. The official version of events – that the crowds were angered by this display of factionalism, and fell upon the offenders spontaneously – is borne out even by Oppositionists' accounts.<sup>117</sup>

The November demonstration was followed by hastily-convened meetings in Moscow's party cells, many of which called for the expulsion of Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev and Smilga from the Communist Party. On 9 November the MK, no doubt with prior sanction from the Politburo, resolved that the 'Trotskyist-Mensheviks' Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky and Smilga should be expelled from the party as soon as possible.<sup>118</sup> Within a week, the Central Control Commission had ruled that Zinoviev and Trotsky should be expelled from the party, though Kamenev was only removed from his official Central Committee position.<sup>119</sup>

As the fifteenth Congress approached, therefore, the threat from the Opposition had been neutralised. Further tactics were used to reduce the possibility of Opposition speeches from the floor. Known Oppositionists were excluded from the lists of candidates at local elections to the Congress, thus ensuring an overwhelming majority for the centre. As the Congress assembled in Moscow, provincial delegates were apparently rehearsed in advance to make sure that they would be able to argue in support of the official line.<sup>120</sup> A skeleton organisation continued to provide Trotsky with information and to agitate among sympathetic rank and filers. But the fifteenth Congress marked the end of the Opposition's campaign.

It is difficult to assess how much support the Left enjoyed. Its own self-promotion was vigorous. In addition, real or imagined fears that the Opposition would regroup, together with the lurid propaganda reports of 'conspiracies' which characterised the press of the 1930s, have made it difficult to establish exactly how strong the movement was. The picture is further distorted because of the sympathy the Left has commanded among historians in the West, where it is often regarded as the defender of the ideals of the revolution against bureaucratic encroachments.

There is no doubt that the Opposition campaign in Moscow in 1923 rocked the party at a time when the country's political future was very uncertain. In terms of sheer numbers, the Opposition was never as powerful again, but memories of 1923 gave its speeches a continued potency. Moreover, the existence of 'circles' plotting against the Politburo majority could not be ignored. Russians were used to the idea that such

conspiracies could lead to momentous changes. The Opposition's choice of tactics partly explains the disproportionate reaction of the party and the secret police. But its network of circles and publications failed to attract widespread support. Students made up the largest proportion of its membership, the next largest group being office workers. If the struggle after 1925 had ever come to a show of hands in the party, the Opposition would have been the clear loser in Moscow. This point can be demonstrated by looking at the figures for Trotskyists purged from the Moscow party organisation in 1927. According to archival sources, 143 Oppositionists were excluded in 1927; 41 white-collar workers, 82 students and 16 workers.<sup>121</sup> Worker support had dwindled almost to nothing. When Ioffe, one of Trotsky's closest supporters and personal friends, committed suicide in 1927, a full-scale funeral was arranged, with burial at the Novodevichi cemetery. The crowd which followed the cortege included 'Komsomol youth with Trotskyist leanings' and former military officials from the days when Ioffe and Trotsky were both eminent military leaders, but there were 'no workers'. According to a sympathetic witness, Yakubovich, 'the United Opposition had no proletarian support'.<sup>122</sup>

Numerical strength was not the Left's only weapon, however. Beyond the mere fact of its existence, which was a clear demonstration that the party was not a single, unified body, it was a threat to the majority because of the nature of its criticisms. In Moscow, and probably in every other major industrial city, the pro-peasant line of 'high NEP' gave rise to doubts among the more urbanised workers.<sup>123</sup> As Bauman, the future MK secretary, was to put it in the autumn of 1927, 'there can't be two socialisms, one for the countryside and one for the city'.<sup>124</sup> More than elsewhere, moreover, Moscow saw the inequality and corruption which accompanied the new world of the Nepman. Even if these were regarded as necessary evils, the Opposition was able to strike a genuinely sensitive nerve by drawing attention to them. The elaborate campaign against it was partly fuelled by the fact that its criticisms came at a time when the party felt threatened by the compromises it was having to make.

The future was to show, however, that it was not only observations on the economy, or even the attack on the leadership's disastrous Chinese policy, which attracted popular sympathy. Ironically, in view of Trotsky's commitment to Bolshevik Party discipline, it was the Opposition's status as an alternative which drew rank and file party members towards the Left for the next few years. Workers who had made sacrifices for the Revolution were to show that bread and butter

issues, although important, were not the only key to their political allegiance. It was the stifling of discussion which alienated them, a betrayal of the cause for which many had fought so bitterly a decade before. In the matter of 'party democracy', as we shall see in the next chapter, Uglanov was an uncompromising centraliser, and under his regime the MK's grip over the lower echelons was tightened as never before. A report by the MK's own information department on the condition of the Moscow organisation in November 1928 stated that 'party members virtually everywhere' were expressing disapproval of control by the centre. 'They want real democracy,' it read, 'up to date information and the guarantee that workers will have the right to pass resolutions and not just to carry them out.'<sup>125</sup>

The case of a worker at the Krasnyi Proletarii factory illustrates the attraction of an alternative, a group which in defeat could appear as a 'democratic', anti-centralising movement. In March 1929, a Communist called Panov was called before the party cell in the factory to account for his interest in the Left, now clearly condemned as 'anti-party' activity. Already doomed, he made no secret of his disagreements with the party majority, listing among his criticisms the handling of the Chinese question and the treatment of poor peasants. On the question of the party itself, he declared that 'there is no broad democracy, the apparatus decides for the whole party, the party mass is a consultative and not a deliberative organisation, everything is decided up above'.<sup>126</sup> It was this aspect of the political situation, together with the Chinese crisis, which had drawn him to the Opposition. 'The situation was getting worse,' he said, 'and there was no information,' so 'I began to read a lot of Opposition material.'

The Opposition's problem was that mere sympathy was not enough to alter the course of policy. At their most active, sympathisers might hand on a few illegally-printed documents<sup>127</sup> and perhaps hold tiny secret meetings, soon discovered and suppressed by the authorities. People like Panov seldom participated in organised 'factions'. It is not clear from his account whether he intended to take his reading any further, and he represented no threat whatsoever to the majority's hold on power and policy-making. Opposition sympathisers remained a very small fraction of the party as a whole. The majority of the rank and file by the late 1920s was dedicated to practical changes, the building of socialism, and if people were sometimes doubtful about the activities of the central authorities, they could submerge their doubts in their hopes for the future and in the powerful fear of reprisals. Moreover, some of the older generation had brushed with Trotsky's 'democracy'

in the early 1920s, and knew it to be a chimera.<sup>128</sup> The Opposition's supporters were often vague about the real aims of the movement, which was understandable in view of the divisions in its leadership, and many, like Panov, turned to it because it was the only alternative. It alarmed the Stalin–Bukharin group, but it could never have stormed the party by mere numbers in the late 1920s.

The United Opposition in Moscow was thus more feared by the leadership than its real strength deserved, and more embarrassing, because of its political standpoint, than it was feared. But neither its own leaders nor the Politburo majority doubted that it was an organised opposition. The following year, 1928, was to see a very different phenomenon in Moscow: an 'opposition' movement that was confined to the leadership, which never stated its position in a confrontational way and which was swept aside before the mass of party members knew exactly what had been going on. At the time of its defeat, however, it proved so useful that its importance was to be exaggerated for years to come.

## 2 The Right Deviation in Moscow, 1928

The political rehabilitation of the Right in the Soviet Union in July 1988 was accompanied by a statement that while its leaders had made 'mistakes', they had not engaged in 'anti-party' activity.<sup>1</sup> A close study of the Right's activities in Moscow in 1928 suggests that this is not far from the truth, even if 'anti-party' activity is defined in the traditional Stalinist way as opposition or factional behaviour. Stalin himself declared that he did not think the Rightists 'had a faction' and that there was 'no basis to accuse them' of failing to submit to party decisions.<sup>2</sup> Although Stalin later described the Right in exactly the same terms as any other opposition, Soviet historians have also favoured a more modest account of their actions. Since Stalin's death they have generally described the Right as a 'deviation' (*uklon*) rather than an 'opposition'.<sup>3</sup> The distinction is not accidental. The Right lacked the Trotskyists' organisation, and they did not attempt to agitate among the rank and file. A very different set of circumstances brought them into prominence. Despite numerous studies of Stalin's rise to power and the Right as a policy alternative,<sup>4</sup> however, relatively little is known about the organisation and tactics of the last major Bolshevik faction.

Moscow's history in 1928 is particularly important here. It was in Moscow that the Right had its only real organisational base and there also that it was decisively defeated. The relationship between Moscow Rightists and the leaders of the movement was a close one. But the Muscovites were more willing to show their hand, their speeches and actions betraying a greater impatience with the Stalin group. In the end the Moscow faction was sacrificed by its own colleagues in an attempt to take the heat out of the conflict in the Politburo and the national press. The events of 1928 not only sealed the fate of the Right, but also helped to redefine the relationship between the central elite and local party leaders. Moscow was brought more closely into line with the Central Committee. The last major deviant faction in the capital was broken up. Thereafter, opposition to the leadership would be sporadic, small-scale and short-lived.



## THE LEFT, THE RIGHT AND THE 'CENTRE', 1927–8

The background to the events in Moscow was the deepening crisis over grain procurements, itself aggravated by fears about the Soviet Union's military and industrial viability. In policy terms the Right regarded themselves as the defenders of orthodoxy. Citing Lenin, they emphasised the need for NEP to be conducted 'seriously and for a long time', without recourse to the exaggerated planning targets foreshadowed in 1928. The key to development would be improvements in agriculture; industrial growth could not simply be forced. As Bukharin put it in 1928, 'The greatest sustained advance is achieved when industry develops on a basis provided by a rapidly growing agriculture . . . . You can beat your breast, vow your support for industrialisation, and take your oath on it, and curse all enemies and apostates, but this will not improve things a bit.'<sup>5</sup>

The pivot of Bukharin's policy was the class alliance, the *smychka*, between the working class and the poor and middle peasants. The *smychka* was so fundamental that even the Stalinists could not openly abandon it. But their view of what was permissible included greater pressure on the peasants than the Rightists were prepared to accept. It was not the case that the latter refused to consider any revisions in the policy of 'high NEP'. By the autumn of 1927 the need for increased investment in heavy industry was generally acknowledged. It was also agreed that moves in the direction of planning were essential. One of the two main speeches at the fifteenth Party Congress on this and other industrial questions was made by Rykov, soon to be regarded as the leader of the Right deviation.<sup>6</sup> Kamenev had predicted that victory over the Left would remove the last source of cohesion between the Stalin and Bukharin factions, but it was not until the spring of 1928 that clear signs of a split were reported.

The immediate occasion for the break was Stalin's use of 'extraordinary measures' to enforce grain collections.<sup>7</sup> In order to meet the grain quota for the winter of 1927–8, a policy of forced marketings was introduced, including the prosecution of hoarders, the closure of rural markets and the seizure of grain from supposed 'kulaks'. Rykov is alleged to have expressed his opposition to the methods in a letter to Stalin in February 1928, while Stalin justified the steps in a Central Committee circular, 'The first results of the grain procurement campaign and the task of the party'.<sup>8</sup> Events in the spring helped to deepen the rift. In May came the Shakhty affair, the public trial of a group of mining specialists for

alleged 'sabotage', and a second round of 'extraordinary measures', better publicised and less effective than the first. By early summer the existence of a split between Stalin and the 'Rykovites' was widely acknowledged in political circles. As one historian puts it, 'by late June, despite its public façade, there was neither pretence nor grounds for unity within the leadership'.<sup>9</sup>

The 'public façade' remained one of unity, however. This was a major difference between the Right and previous opposition groups. On Stalin's part silence was preferable to admitting that he was about to follow a line almost indistinguishable for practical purposes from that of the Left. Moreover, it is unlikely that he knew at this stage where his initiative would take him. 'Stalin is silent', wrote Trotsky in July, 'because he has nothing to say'.<sup>10</sup> The Rykov group's reticence is harder to explain. It can be attributed to their fear of appearing to be a 'faction', especially after the expulsion of Trotsky. They had observed, too, that appeals to a wider public, within the party or beyond it, had failed to help the Left. Recent political events dictated their tactics to them before the struggle began. They might have seemed the stronger in the spring, being the upholders of the official line against Stalin's seemingly fantastic schemes.<sup>11</sup> But they lacked Stalin's political agility. First they were forced into a position where they looked like the initiators of the rift. 'Stalin manoeuvres', Bukharin told Kamenev in July, 'so that we appear as splitters'.<sup>12</sup> Then even their majority in the Politburo disappeared. By the time the Central Committee met in July, Kalinin and Voroshilov unexpectedly turned out to be on Stalin's side. Bukharin concluded ruefully that 'Stalin has some special hold over them'.<sup>13</sup>

Although its final resolutions, condemning the further use of 'extraordinary measures' and proposing increases in the price of grain, looked like a partial victory, the July plenum was a turning point for the Right. Bukharin was so alarmed that he rashly appealed to his erstwhile opponent, Kamenev.<sup>14</sup> It was also from July that the Right began to organise themselves, or so rumour had it, holding that Bukharin had begun to co-ordinate the activities of his colleagues and supporters.<sup>15</sup> Whatever measures they took were fruitless, however, for a succession of setbacks followed in the summer and autumn of 1928. These included a change in the editorial board of *Pravda*, breaking Bukharin's hold over editorial policy, and the condemnation of Rightism at the Comintern Congress in the late summer. Bukharin, Rykov and Tomskii were not openly attacked, however, until the following

spring. The next stage in the campaign against the Right was the removal of the MK leadership in October. This was the culmination of a long struggle, possibly the hardest fought in the whole campaign.

## THE RIGHT DEVIATION IN MOSCOW

The Right's main Moscow base was within the MK. Uglanov, the First Secretary, headed the movement, and at times even took the initiative from the Politburo Right group. Uglanov's antipathy to the Left had been an example to the party as a whole between 1925 and 1927. It arose from his conviction that their policies were mistaken, the same conviction that drove him to oppose the Stalinists in 1928.<sup>16</sup> He favoured the development of existing light industries, particularly textiles, which were the staple industry of Moscow in the 1920s. He was unsympathetic to the idea of speeding up industrial construction through an 'irresponsible' investment policy.<sup>17</sup> Within the enterprise, his line was to advocate the strict observance of the triangle, that is, the clear demarcation of responsibility between management, the trade union and the party cell. He was known to uphold the rights of the former against those of the party and trade union, although he was not simply 'pro-manager' and until the Shakhty trial of the spring of 1928, his position was not unusual. But nor was it universally popular. His tendency to allow management to over-rule factory party cells on economic and labour issues was called into question by party colleagues, notably at the February 1928 MK plenum.<sup>18</sup> Soviet historians have also suggested that Uglanov deliberately courted factory managers in an effort to win support in the city<sup>19</sup>.

The 'Moscow line' on agricultural questions was notable for its tolerance of the kulak.<sup>20</sup> Like his attitude towards management, this aspect of Uglanov's approach has drawn criticism from Soviet historians, who report that Uglanov referred to the kulak as 'our dear little kulak' (*kulachishka*) as late as February 1928.<sup>21</sup> Uglanov's line contrasted sharply with that of his deputy, Karl Bauman, who at this time was also chairman of the Central Committee's department for rural affairs. But it was only after February 1928 that Uglanov emerged as a 'deviationist' in these matters. Indeed, he was one of the party secretaries who travelled to the grain areas (in his case the Volga region) in the winter of 1927–8 to collect information for the Central Committee.<sup>22</sup>

Other aspects of the Uglanov approach, such as his reluctance to countenance wholesale proletarian recruitment, had been highlighted

during the struggle against Zinoviev's faction in 1925. Some of these policies were popular with his colleagues, but others turned out to be more controversial. The question of workers' promotion (*vydvizhenie*) 'from the bench' to responsible posts in the factory administration was one of these.<sup>23</sup> Uglanov was opposed to promotion if it impeded what he regarded as the smooth running of the enterprise. But his qualms were not shared by all his colleagues.<sup>24</sup> Within the party, moreover, he insisted on very tight discipline, defining 'intra-party democracy' in terms which indicated that the initiative lay firmly with the apparatus and senior officials.<sup>25</sup> Overall his attitude towards the rank and file made him enemies among those whose interpretation of the aims of the Bolshevik party inclined towards the Left.

Uglanov was also unpopular with many of Moscow's workers, both within the party and outside it. As party leader he bore the brunt of criticism for the hardships of 1925–6, during which wage cuts in some branches of Moscow industry ran at 30 per cent and unemployment in the capital at roughly 113 000 in a total population of just over two million.<sup>26</sup> Unemployment, particularly in a city annually flooded with thousands of migrant workers from the villages,<sup>27</sup> was largely beyond his control, and the economies of the mid-1920s were part of a national policy, but Uglanov's speeches did nothing to improve his image. Moreover, his implacable repression of the United Opposition, which had posed as the champion of working-class needs, made him seem contrastingly unsympathetic. Ironically, despite their championship of the textile industry, Moscow was one of the last places where Rightist politicians, identified with the NEP of high unemployment and an over-prosperous countryside, were likely to attract support. Among workers in the capital, the harsh living conditions of the mid-1920s, together with the suppression of criticism, became known as the *Uglanovshchina*.<sup>28</sup> When the time came to put his popularity to the test in the autumn of 1928, Uglanov could not count on the loyalty of Moscow's proletariat.

After the purge of 1924–5 and the anti-Left campaigns which followed it, most members of the Moscow party apparatus were anti-Trotskyist. In many cases, their position was a principled one; anti-Left because they believed in the more moderate goals of the Bukharinists. In 1928 that put them on the party's Right wing. Next in seniority to Uglanov came his deputy, Kotov. He joined the party in 1915. After the Civil War, which he spent in Rostov-on-Don, he moved to Moscow to be secretary of the Sokol'niki *raikom*. There he acquired the reputation of an 'arch-disciplinarian' and advocate of military-style party

organisation.<sup>29</sup> Like Uglanov he participated in the suppression of the Kronstadt mutiny in his capacity as a delegate to the tenth Party Congress.<sup>30</sup> He was appointed second secretary of the MK after the purge of the Left in January 1925. For him, as for many other Rightists, the idea of opposition was anathema. This was to be a major source of weakness when the crisis broke in the summer.

Other future Rightists who had served for long periods in Moscow included N. N. Mandel'shtam, M. N. Ryutin, M. A. Pen'kov and V. A. Yakovlev. Mandel'shtam was a veteran revolutionary, active since the 1890s, who had joined the Bolsheviks at the time of the split between the two factions in 1902 and participated in the Bolshevik Revolution in the capital<sup>31</sup>. After a spell as head of the MK committee on *shefstvo*, he took over the Moscow *agitpropotdel* in 1927, and remained there until October 1928, despite ill-health.<sup>32</sup> Ryutin, from the Irkutsk region, had a distinguished Siberian political career before his move to Moscow. After active service in the Civil War in Transbaikalia and Harbin, he became the secretary of the Dagestan provincial party committee in 1923. Despite resistance from the Siberian party leadership, which considered him indispensable, he was called to Moscow in 1924<sup>33</sup>. There he moved from strength to strength, from the secretaryship of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom* in 1924 to the more important Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* in 1927.<sup>34</sup> Pen'kov joined the party in 1907 and spent seven years in exile in Siberia before the Revolution. In the early 1920s he worked in the Moscow Province as secretary of Bogorod *ukom*, where the Left were particularly strong, and it was from there that he was moved to the city as secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom* in May 1928.<sup>35</sup> Yakovlev, who joined the party in 1914, became the secretary of Khamovniki *raikom* in 1927, possibly after work in a tank factory.<sup>36</sup> Another influential Rightist in Moscow was the secretary of the Moscow Control Commission (MKK), G. S. Moroz. Outside the party apparatus, both the chairman of MGSPS, Mikhailov, and the Chairman of the Moscow textile workers' union, Mel'nichanskii, advocated the further development of Moscow's staple textile industry. They were also associates of the national trade union chairman, Tomskii,<sup>37</sup> and were both identified with the Right in 1928.

The 'Stalinists' on the MK fell into two categories. The majority kept relatively quiet until October 1928, by which time it was clear which side was going to win. But a small core of officials publicly opposed Uglanov from an early stage. Among these, the most prominent were K. Ya. Bauman, V. E. Tsifrinovich, V. I. Polonskii and B. V. Giber, the secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*. The first three were all connected

with the Moscow Committee's organisation-assignments department (*orgraspredotdel*). Bauman, an economics graduate before the Revolution and former secretary of the Kursk *gubkom*, had been its head from May 1925 to May 1928, when he was succeeded by Polonskii.<sup>38</sup> Tsifrinovich was deputy head of the *orgraspredotdel* until his appointment to the secretaryship of Bauman *raikom* in June 1928.<sup>39</sup> The central role played by *orgraspredotdel* members in the defeat of the Moscow Right provides confirmation not only that Stalin kept a close rein on appointments to this crucial branch of the apparatus, but also that it was an important tool in his rise to power in the party. Some of the officials who assisted in this rise were no doubt mainly motivated by careerism. But others supported what was to become the Stalin line from conviction. Bauman's statement on the need to end class differences in the countryside<sup>40</sup> pre-dated any such declaration by Stalin or his close colleagues, for example. The division in the MK had as much to do with policy debates as with personal rivalries.

#### 'FACTIONAL ACTIVITY': FEBRUARY–OCTOBER 1928

It is easier to identify the two MK factions than to specify exactly what they did to further their causes in 1928. The Rightists in particular have been the victims of misrepresentation. Even their own later statements must be treated with caution, for some tried to exonerate themselves by denying that they had engaged in 'factional activity' while others attempted to win clemency by admitting to an extensive conspiracy. Among the latter was Pen'kov, who made a long speech at the sixteenth Party Congress in 1930 'to correct the view that no factional work was carried on.' At MK meetings, he explained, 'whenever we discussed any question, Uglanov nearly always declared what the view of our leaders was, that is, the view of the leaders of the Right Deviation.' Pen'kov affirmed that the Right began to mobilise in February 1928. The Moscow Rightists discussed how best to proceed, allegedly consulting Bukharin so that their efforts could be 'more fruitful' and deciding to begin by winning over the leading cadres in the *raions*. Those who would not agree were to be removed from their posts. By July, there were two MKs, he said, 'us', and those who did not share these views, mostly heads of MK *otdely* rather than *raikom* secretaries.<sup>41</sup>

Pen'kov may have been exaggerating, but it is true that the Moscow Rightists were more active than the Politburo triumvirate. After the

July plenum their outspoken campaign was to be criticised by their own Politburo colleagues<sup>42</sup>. It is possible that they used sessions of the Orgburo to raise the issue of grain policy with Stalin from March 1928.<sup>43</sup>

This lobbying continued into the summer, and culminated with Uglanov's speech at the July plenum, one of the least temperate at the session. Uglanov called on the Stalinists to make it clear what they intended 'in order that the peasants shall have no grounds for fearing that we're returning to War Communism'. He explained that workers had reaped no benefit from the controversial spring campaign. 'They are having to put up with rationing or its near equivalent', he said. 'This cannot go on forever, particularly as they are asking what they have gained from eleven years of revolution. I have to say this, even if I am branded as a deviationist who panics'. In the face of ridicule from Stalin, he asked for the resolutions of the fifteenth Party Congress to be clarified. He also attacked the 'excessive centralism' of the Politburo in terms more forthright than anyone had used since the defeat of the Left.<sup>44</sup>

The Moscow Right aimed to secure the widest possible party support for the view that the recent 'extraordinary measures' had posed an unacceptable threat to the *smychka*. They spoke openly about the dangers of certain types of policy, and an informed reader of their speeches can see how outspoken they were. But they were not prepared to behave like an opposition. Rykov's report to a 3500-strong meeting of the Moscow Party *aktiv* after the July Plenum provides an example of their approach. He did not mention the struggle within the leadership, nor did he suggest that people should rally round any particular group. But he painted a grim picture of the condition of the villages in the wake of the spring grain campaigns. The crisis, he said,

is visible to anyone who walks down the street of any provincial city .... Generally, the sharpening of the grain question and the widespread use of so-called 'extraordinary measures' has led to a change in their attitude towards us by the broad peasant mass, both middle and poor peasants, which, if the elements of disaffection are not removed, could represent a serious threat to the *smychka* between workers and peasants.

To prove that the 'extraordinary measures' had hit the middle peasants, a claim which the Stalinists would have denied, Rykov quoted figures from the local courts, where the incidence of prosecutions for hoarding was recorded. In Siberia itself, only 5 per cent of the cases had been

brought against the middle peasants, but in Tyumen' *okrug*, the worst example, out of 837 cases, over a quarter had involved poor peasants, while 64 per cent had been brought against middle peasants and only 7 per cent against kulaks. Furthermore, he continued, the question was not simply a numerical one. Even 'one or two' cases in which middle peasants were attacked 'would create resonances of discontent throughout the peasant population'. Unlike the period of War Communism, when the peasants had at least been able to view the Bolsheviks as allies against a common enemy, there was now no basis for co-operation except mutual economic benefit. If this were threatened, the regime could expect serious trouble. Rykov also argued that there was no basis for the 'extraordinary measures' in the resolutions of the fifteenth Party Congress, implicitly drawing a parallel between the Stalinists and the old Left. The new policies, he said, were 'suicide' along the lines attacked by Lenin in his pamphlet of 1921, *On the Food Tax*.<sup>45</sup>

*Pravda*, whose editorial board now included several of Stalin's supporters, did not publish this speech in full. An amended version appeared on 15 July, making no criticism of current trends and leaving out all suggestions of discontent in rural areas. *Rabochaya Moskva* however, still a Rightist organ, published the whole text, and did so after the *Pravda* report appeared, thus defying the line of the central paper.

'Closed' meeting of Moscow Rightists became more frequent as the autumn wore on. Pen'kov, for example, was said to have held a meeting at eight in the morning, without giving notice of the fact, when usually *raikom* meetings were held in the early evening.<sup>46</sup> It is unlikely, however, that the Right used such occasions to rally supporters openly. No stenographic reports of closed meetings are available. Contemporary accounts tell conflicting stories. One of Trotsky's correspondents described Uglanov as telling a meeting of carefully-selected activists in September that Stalin was wrong, that his figures were falsified and that steps were being taken to contain him.<sup>47</sup> But this report does not square with the other evidence, including that of some other papers in the same archive. On 25 September, for example, another of Trotsky's correspondents had Uglanov holding a meeting behind locked doors and in a building with every exit, including the windows, sealed; but he is supposed to have spoken about the mood of the workers and the dangers of Trotskyism, and not about the need to resist the Stalinist threat.<sup>48</sup>

This version is supported by the evidence of the September Joint Plenum of the MK and MKK. The main speakers were Uglanov and



Moroz. A month later Uglanov was to apologise for his speech, 'On the forthcoming tasks of the Moscow Organisation', and to admit that he had made 'serious errors'. These 'errors', however, were ones of omission; failure to mention the danger of the Right, reference to which had become mandatory in this kind of speech after the Comintern Congress, failure to dwell on the economic achievements of the period, failure to refer to the role of the working class in building up the economy.<sup>49</sup> The speech contained no reference to the activities of Stalin, and nothing to suggest that there were any serious arguments going on in the Politburo. The omissions mentioned earlier made it a bold speech, but it was not the speech of a militant opposition leader, and it is interesting that *Pravda* was prepared to publish the full text, albeit eleven days later.<sup>50</sup>

To Uglanov's audience there were plenty of clues as to his point of view. He dwelled on the mood of the workers, especially those with rural ties. Their main worry, in his view, was the future of the countryside. 'The workers', he said, 'are looking closely at our work in the sphere of setting our relations with the peasants in order.'<sup>51</sup> Later in the speech, he gave more detail, referring to the need for 'revolutionary legality' in the collection of the agricultural tax. 'I do not have any official figures', he said, 'but all the same, individual facts indicate that there is a growing tendency to crush the peasant farms. I repeat that I do not have any precise figures, but we must clarify this question.'<sup>52</sup> On industry, he quoted the resolutions of the fifteenth Congress at length before asking whether they were being fulfilled. Although he mentioned the need for an 'unrelenting pace' of development, his main worry was for the future of the textile industry in Moscow, faced with a shortage of cotton. He appeared to be satisfied with the progress of heavy industry, an emphasis which held a clear meaning in the autumn of 1928.<sup>53</sup>

The last part of his speech was devoted to the intra-party situation. It showed how fearful the Right had become of the slightest hint that they might be organising an opposition. Uglanov suggested that current rumours about a new 'Right-Centre' split were being spread maliciously by the Left. 'In the course of solving the gigantic problems which face us, on particular occasions it happens that we even argue', he explained. 'The Opposition is trying to make use of this, putting out a version about "right" and "centrist" deviations in the party leadership, about "right" groups within it, and some members of the party have swallowed this line of the opposition's.' The rumours, however, had no foundation, Uglanov assured his audience, but were the product of Leftist propaganda at the time of the Comintern Congress.<sup>54</sup>

The question of factions was to occur many times in the rest of the discussion. According to Alferov, the head of the Rogozhsko-Simonovskii raion agitpropotdel,

If we put the question in the way Uglanov did, it would be difficult to face the party *aktiv*. We musn't say that all the disagreements were exaggerated by the opposition, and that in fact there aren't any disagreements. Our party members understand, they have a feeling, that at the top level, in the Politburo, something was going on, that there were arguments of some sort, that there was something of a 'punch-up' .... I think that we must say this directly, and try to make sure that this 'punch-up', if it exists, comes to an end, so that our comrades who are dealing with these matters don't hurt each other.<sup>55</sup>

Uglanov did not answer this criticism in his closing remarks, leaving it to Moroz to do so. The latter, after a few pointed remarks about Alferov's motives, explained that there were always differences of opinion at plenums of the Central Committee.

Comrade Stalin said this to one of the Moscow *aktiv*, he quoted, "What do you think, that we got together in the Politburo so as to exchange compliments with each other? Come on, can't shades of opinion be expressed at the plenum of the Central Committee?" And that's what happened .... They argued. However, anyone who mutters that in the Central Committee there are Rights and Lefts ... undoubtedly provides grist to Trotsky's mill.<sup>56</sup>

Why was the Right being so cautious at this point? Partly it was because they felt themselves to be cornered. Instead of supporting a successful Politburo faction, the Moscow Rightists found in the autumn of 1928 that they were in the front line of a retreat. Uglanov was fighting in September for his political life. But it was also because factional tactics were unacceptable to people like Bukharin, and even Uglanov. The Right was not prepared to behave like an opposition, to become, in the Soviet phrase, an 'anti-party group'. Uglanov's colleagues in the Politburo never spoke out publicly in his defence. It is possible, indeed, that the triumvirate deliberately dropped Uglanov in September, allowing Stalin to devour the Moscow Rightists in return for a breathing space for themselves.<sup>57</sup>

## THE LIQUIDATION OF THE MOSCOW RIGHT

The struggle culminated in mid-October. By then two important changes had taken place in the Moscow party. First, the efforts of

Stalinists like Bauman and Polonskii, who had been working within the MK leadership since the spring to create a strong base for opposition to Uglanov, now paid off, and a large proportion of MK members were ready to condemn Uglanov's activities. Second, the routine elections of the cell buros in factories and administrative establishments had taken place, and Polonskii, whose responsibility it was to run these, had made sure that they were organised so as to favour candidates of whom he approved.<sup>58</sup> By mid-October Uglanov discovered that he no longer controlled his own organisation. His attempt, for example, to remove the Stalinists Laz'yan, Kuznetsov and Alferov from their *raikom* posts, was blocked by the Central Committee, which was now taking a direct hand in Moscow's affairs.<sup>59</sup> Sensing defeat, Uglanov attempted to appease his critics with a letter, drafted on 2 October and approved at a closed meeting of the MK buro. It contained a programme for the MK in the coming months and a recognition of past mistakes.<sup>60</sup> This was not enough for the Stalinists, however, and in the following week they began their own campaign.<sup>61</sup> Between 14 and 16 October emergency meetings were held in the *raions*, each calling for an investigation into the MK's recent activities.<sup>62</sup> The result was a joint plenum of the MK and MKK, called on 18–19 October.

Uglanov's speech at the plenum began with an admission of his errors of September. He stressed, however, that he had done everything he could, including drafting the letter of 2 October, to put them right. He protested that his mistakes were ones of judgement and emphasis rather than evidence of a campaign of opposition. He attacked colleagues on the MK who had approved the draft of his letter in a closed session of the MK buro but still went on to mount a campaign against him. Giber, he said, 'in recent weeks, in recognition of our years of friendship, has called me a political bankrupt'.<sup>63</sup> Polonskii, who produced a rival letter, was accused of stirring up trouble, and he dismissed the letter itself, a mere page, as unconstructive.<sup>64</sup> He insisted that he was a loyal Bolshevik, whose policies were almost indistinguishable from anyone else's in the leadership. But he allowed that other MK members, who were to be the sacrificial victims of the plenum, had been less cautious. Mandel'shtam he had publicly reprimanded in August for urging the party rank and file to criticise their superiors 'without being afraid of the word "deviation"'.<sup>65</sup> Ryutin, he said, had been in 'error' to tell a meeting of the Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* that Stalin had his faults, 'which Lenin had talked about'.<sup>66</sup>

The Rightists refused to accept criticism meekly in the debate which followed, but the Stalinists had most of it their own way, particularly

as Stalin himself attended. He achieved the maximum dramatic effect by walking into the auditorium, accompanied by Molotov, in the middle of Uglanov's speech. The latter was interrupted in mid-sentence by a standing ovation.<sup>67</sup> Uglanov's accusers spoke of the irregular activities of individual MK secretaries and their high-handed manner with junior officials. Kuznetsov, an activist from Zamoskvorech'e *raion*, coined the term '*po-Uglanovski*' to describe Uglanov's misleading way of presenting facts.<sup>68</sup> Gubel'man remarked that it was the first time in five years that the Moscow organisation had been subjected to any sort of internal criticism.<sup>69</sup>

The Rightists responded with carefully edited accounts of their errors, for the most part adopting Uglanov's line of denying that there had been a plot. They also counter-attacked by accusing the Stalinists of underhand tactics in the *raions* 'while Uglanov was trying to solve the current problems'.<sup>70</sup> The balance of the debate, however, was tipped by the presence of the two Politburo heavyweights. Molotov came to Polonskii's defence, referring to his activities as 'what any loyal Bolshevik would do'. Stalin, summing up, gave a characteristically low-key speech, in which he denied the existence of a Right in the Politburo but observed drily that such a thing did seem to have been active in Moscow.<sup>71</sup>

Uglanov escaped retribution at this plenum. Only four MK officials were removed; Pen'kov, who anticipated his speech of the following April by a confession here, Ryutin, Mandel'shtam and Moroz.<sup>72</sup> The respite was even said to have given Uglanov fresh hope, and he was rumoured in early November to be planning a new campaign.<sup>73</sup> However, in the long run, his fate was inescapable, and in November, he was replaced as first secretary in Moscow by Molotov. He was moved, it was alleged at the time as the result of a deal between Rykov and Stalin, to the People's Commissariat for Labour, a post which he held for just as long as his erstwhile colleagues had enough influence to prevent his downfall.<sup>74</sup>

## THE RIGHT'S SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Both majority and opposition groups in the Bolshevik Party regarded Moscow as a valuable asset in political struggles, but there was room for debate about what was involved in controlling the capital. The Trotskyists had worked on the whole population, not just the party, but workers also, in the hope of storming the leadership from all sides.

Some of Uglanov's remarks indicate that he also saw the value of mass support. Open opposition, however, was not a course available to him. As one of Trotsky's friends scathingly observed, 'the idiots do no work among the workers themselves, but confine themselves to scheming'.<sup>75</sup> The Right's campaign in Moscow was directed mainly at winning over the party's intermediate ranks. It remains now to assess how much support they, or indeed the Stalinists, commanded in the capital.

Because of the way in which the Right emerged, not as a new political faction but as the defenders of the existing situation, they could count on a certain amount of support without doing anything. Outside the top ranks of the party apparatus, however, this support was likely to remain passive unless they explained that the status quo was under threat. As we have seen, they succeeded in drawing attention to the central questions in the controversy with the Stalinists. But it was not clear what they were asking people to do. They did not present themselves as the group who could translate people's unease about Stalin's plans into concrete alternatives. Co-ordination between the Moscow group and the Politburo appeared weak, and the mobilisation of supporters in the bureaucracy and elsewhere was half-hearted and belated.

Within the party apparatus, it was true, as Trotsky was told, that most Rightists were secretaries or *raikom* secretaries, while the heads of *otdely* tended to be less sympathetic. However, of the six *raikom* secretaries, only three, Ryutin, Yakovlev and Pen'kov, actively supported the Right, while Giber and Tsifrinovich were on the Stalinist side. The MK departments were divided. The Right controlled the *agitpropotdel*, and thus also the press, and it was to the Rights' advantage that both the Moscow party journals – *Sputnik Kommunist*, *Propagandist* and *Sputnik Agitator* – and the party newspaper – *Rabochaya Moskva*, which had the largest circulation of any newspaper in the capital – printed material supporting the Rightist line until after October. On the other hand, the strategic *orgaspredotdel* was solidly opposed to the Uglanov faction. To circumvent the Stalinists in this department, Uglanov allegedly attempted to revive the sub-department of accounting-assignments (*uchraspred*) under a trusted deputy, but the move came to nothing.<sup>76</sup> The Stalinists' presence at the highest level in the MK also made it impossible for the Right to use MK bureau meetings to discuss their strategy, and gave their opponents a valuable insight into their activities from day to day.

The party's intermediate ranks also presented problems for the Right. After the MK itself, the *raikoms* were the most important link in the

party structure, supervising local workplace organisations, approving their heads, instructing their propagandists and controlling their budgets. Although at least half of their secretaries were Rightists, the other members of the *raikom* buros were not necessarily so, as the example of Alferov illustrates. It was in the *raions*, indeed, that opposition to the Right finally came to a head in October.

Below the level of the official apparatus the scarcity of source material prohibits a systematic study of political opinion. Three MK information department<sup>77</sup> surveys of the party *aktiv*, conducted after the July Central Committee plenum and the MK's October plenum, provide some of the most valuable information. But although relatively objective (by comparison with the informal letters being sent to Trotsky in Alma-Ata), they are incomplete. Our understanding of grassroots perceptions of the Right-Centre struggle relies on material gathered from a variety of sources, all of it more or less anecdotal. Despite these problems, however, some consistent themes can be detected.

Lack of certainty about the main policy options characterised discussions after the July plenum. Speakers were unsure about the implications of the Central Committee's plans, and worried that both Rykov and Stalin were rocking the boat in different ways. The apparent similarity between Stalin's new course and the old Trotskyist line only added to the confusion. As one speaker uncertainly put it, 'which of the two deviations, Rykov's or Stalin's, is the more dangerous?'<sup>78</sup> Most participants condemned 'extraordinary measures', fearing that they posed a threat to the *smychka* and that they would not substantially alleviate grain shortages. Several of the speakers remarked that the party was returning to War Communism, an idea of which few approved. Others feared that the mechanisation of agriculture would lead to still higher unemployment.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, however, the alternative, a rise in the procurement price for grain, was not widely approved. 'Who will pay for higher grain prices,' asked one speaker, 'if not the working class?'<sup>80</sup> Several speakers felt that the only people who would benefit would be the kulaks. There were also doubts about industry's ability to meet the increased demand for consumer goods in the countryside consequent upon higher grain prices.<sup>81</sup>

These typical statements suggest that party rank and filers did not support either of the Central Committee factions in July. In view of the harsh nature of the options, it is not surprising that neither prospect – on the one hand, continuing high unemployment, possible shortages of grain, and certainly higher bread prices; on the other, repression in the countryside, harsher living conditions for peasants

and possibly some form of enforced collectivisation – appealed to Moscow's working class. Moreover, rank and filers were cynical about the party elite by this stage. Some individuals retained personal allegiances to figures like Bukharin or Tomskii, but most participants in the July discussions were critical of the Central Committee's handling of the grain question and of party life in general. Speakers accused the party leadership of 'short-sightedness' in planning.<sup>82</sup> People also attacked the double standards of political life. 'Your selective self-criticism can't give positive results,' declared one participant. 'If we're going to criticise, we must begin with the Central Committee. "The fish stinks from the head down".'<sup>83</sup>

By October party members had absorbed far more Stalinist propaganda. The 'unmasking' of the Moscow Right was accompanied by a good deal of publicity intended to give activists a clear idea of the issues and the official party line. As a result their views fell more neatly into 'Right' and 'Stalinist' categories. However, Bukharin and Tomskii were not specifically mentioned. As late as March 1929 people were still asking for an explanation of their differences with the Politburo.<sup>84</sup> The condemnation of 'Rightism' in October 1928 referred only to the MK and to a number of specific policies identified with it.

The October report noted that 'Rightist' speeches had been made in about a third of cells, mostly by workers with 'links with the countryside', especially those employed in the textile industry.<sup>85</sup> However, many more speakers called for the elimination of the Right deviation. No doubt fear of reprisals played a part in this. Once the party line was clear, it took considerable courage to stand out against it. Moreover, as soon as the Right had been identified as a 'deviation', all the conditioning of ten years of authoritarian propaganda came into play. But there was more to the grassroots' choice of faction than self-preservation. The comments recorded also reflected party members' fear of 'enemies within'. As one person saw it, 'the Right deviation is reducing our country to dependence on the capitalist powers'. The speeches were stilted, mechanically reflecting official slogans. But these slogans were effective because they touched the genuine concerns of sections of the working class.

Many Muscovites, including those most likely to join the party – young, male workers in the engineering and metalworking industries<sup>86</sup> – had their own reasons for suspecting the Right's policies. Uglanov, as we have seen, had almost no personal following in Moscow. Even textile workers, remembering the wage-cuts and norm-raising of the mid-1920s, had little reason to trust him. Moreover, Stalin was not necessarily

unpopular. The details of his proposals and their later implications were not known in 1928. To his supporters, he was holding out an alternative, and a dramatic one, after a decade when enthusiasm for the Revolution had been sorely tried. 'What on earth did we fight for, why did we allow our blood to flow, if our lot is so bad?' asked a *raion* activist.<sup>87</sup> Stalin's solution carried risks, but they would hit the peasant, it was felt, rather than the cities. Many workers believed that it was high time that the peasant started to pull his weight in carrying through the Revolution.<sup>88</sup> Later on, when 'Rightism' became a blanket term for resistance to 'raising the productivity of labour, raising norms and checking on piece-rates',<sup>89</sup> the question of who supported the Stalinist faction would again be blurred. But in October 1928 it was by no means axiomatic that the Right could command a mass following in the capital. Moreover, its potential source of rank and file sympathy, the workers with rural ties, was also the group least able to organise politically.<sup>90</sup>

The question of political mobilisation was to prove decisive. Fears about the future of the countryside were not the same as active support for Uglanov and his allies. Many groups, especially those outside the party, sympathised with the sort of policies Uglanov was advocating, but without influence within the party and without guidance and co-ordination from the MK faction, they were unable to influence the eventual course of events. In Moscow the most important of these groups was the bureaucracy, both central and regional. 'The bureaucracy in Moscow is divided in the following way,' Boguslavskii wrote to Trotsky in October. 'The Soviet, economic and co-operative apparatuses are mainly on the right and the party apparatus is mainly centrist [i.e. sympathetic to Stalin], though there are also people tolerant of the right in the party apparatus.' He added that the higher echelons of the trade union apparatus were on the Right, though lower down there was bitter controversy.<sup>91</sup>

Like the government bureaucrats, the directors of Moscow's many textile enterprises were mainly on the Right, an allegiance which is understandable both in terms of the Rightists' policies and because of Uglanov's efforts to win their support.<sup>92</sup> In the VUZy, despite their earlier record of Trotskyism, there was also considerable support for the Right. Students at the 'Institute of Red Professors', where Bukharin was a frequent and popular speaker, were known to sympathise with the Right, as were students on technical courses at institutions like the Industrial Academy and the Timiryazev Agricultural College. However, the support of all these groups – directors, bureaucrats and students – being mainly passive, did not affect party politics in 1928. Although a



sit-down strike of civil servants was allegedly mooted in the autumn<sup>93</sup>, for example, it never materialised, which is not surprising in view of the personal risk such action would have carried. Moreover, the fact that Stalin's policies seemed so far-fetched to the many people involved in the details of administration may have led to complacency about the future. 'It's all very well for them to pass resolutions,' said one Muscovite, 'but let's see them put them into action.'<sup>94</sup> Resistance in government institutions to excessively voluntarist measures continued in the early 1930s, but failed to prevent the worst excesses of collectivisation or the mistakes of the all-out drive for production.

The purge figures confirm that as an organisation the Right was a smaller scale operation than the previous Bolshevik oppositions. Compared with the mass removal of Leftists in 1924, relatively few Rightists were purged in Moscow. Average attrition rates of MK members between Moscow party conferences hardly changed over the period 1927–9. Overall the proportion of party members in Moscow who were purged in the first few months of 1929, including people who were not purged for 'factional activity', was 6.5 per cent,<sup>95</sup> far lower than the national average of 11.7 per cent.<sup>96</sup> The purge was more severe in the state apparatus.<sup>97</sup> Many of the exclusions were for reasons of efficiency, and were not specifically 'political'.<sup>98</sup> However, it would be foolish to assume that the remainder, including categories like 'class alien' and 'passive', did not include political opponents of the leadership. Sympathy for the Right had been strong in Moscow's government offices. Among party members who were VUZ students, 4.6 per cent were excluded from the party. Many of these exclusions may have been 'political', but only 43 individuals (out of 22 862)<sup>99</sup> were explicitly excluded for 'factional work'. Outside the MK apparatus, Rightism was more a state of mind than an active political movement.

Why did the Stalinists succeed? Many interpretations have emphasised their tactical advantages – the General Secretary's unique access to the appointments apparatus, the wide-ranging information provided by the 'secret' department, Stalin's ability to turn any crisis to his advantage in the narrow world of Kremlin politics.<sup>100</sup> These factors were crucial in defeating the Moscow oppositions. Stalin's control of the *orgaspredotdel* was indispensable. All appointments were vetted by that department, its head, a Stalinist, was a counter-balance to Uglanov at the highest level within the MK, and through its sub-departments it was able to gather information equal if not superior to any available to the Moscow party secretary. Although Uglanov had 'clients' within the capital, he was not the only patron, and the frequent redeployment of officials prevented his building up a solid 'Moscow' faction.

This interpretation, however, is limited, and cannot alone explain Stalin's victory. The Moscow case suggests two other lines of enquiry. What were the weaknesses which prevented them from realising their potential as alternatives? All were led by high-status party members (many of them considered themselves to be of higher status than Stalin). Stalin's victory needs to be set against their failure. The second question concerns the importance of support for the Bolshevik factions. Unless the emergence of Stalinism is to be seen entirely in terms of apparatus politics, the role of the rank and file, and of specific interest groups, has to be examined. This involves taking the factions' platforms seriously. It is important to know whether specific groups were attracted by the different policy options, or more generally by particular factions' style and rhetoric. Having established this, it remains to be shown what importance can be attached to popular or interest group support.

On the first question, the crucial problem for the groups which found themselves in opposition in the 1920s was that they *were* oppositions. This immediately implied several further handicaps. Joining a deviant political movement was risky for individual party members; as early as 1925 oppositionists were being exiled from Moscow or harassed by the GPU. Still more important was the fact it was widely accepted that opposition activity was detrimental to the general interest; counter-revolutionary, treacherous. The Politburo group which branded its opponents as the 'opposition' always had the advantage. No doubt closet 'apparatus politics' played a part in deciding who should succeed in controlling the party majority.<sup>101</sup> Whatever the reason, Bolshevik theory, and ten years' experience, dictated that any opposition group would then have an uphill struggle. The stigma of the term is reflected in Khrushchev's crude description of the political alignments in Moscow's Industrial Academy in 1929. 'I don't even remember,' he said, 'exactly what the differences were between Bukharin and Rykov on the one hand and Syrtsov and Lominadze on the other. Rightists, oppositionists, right-leftists, deviationists – these people were all moving in the same political direction, and our group was against them.'<sup>102</sup>

The oppositions were also caught in a dilemma. They were all 'loyal' oppositions; none suggested that the Bolshevik party's monopoly should be broken. So their image was hard to disentangle from that of the leadership. Oppositions after 1921 were viewed increasingly as elite factions. The economic issues were followed with interest by party members in the cells, even if they were not necessarily fully understood. But people within the party had too much to lose if they joined an opposition group, and those outside it had little to gain by identifying with another faction in the leadership of the monopolistic party. The

oppositions of the 1920s had their tactics dictated to them by circumstances (and by their own dealings with previous opposition groups). If they remained loyal to the Bolshevik Party, they had to accept its discipline, or overtly challenge it in a way which could be made to appear hypocritical and cowardly.

That is not to say that the opposition groups did not have supporters, or at least sympathisers, in a variety of areas. The point here is that their supporters could not be brought to bear on the political struggles of 1926–7 and 1928. The students and office workers who supported the Trotskyists did not have access to the elite political process. Nor could they hold the country to ransom to get their way. Instead of being an asset, Trotsky's supporters were used against him as evidence of his 'factional' activity. The Right was a slightly different case. Sympathy for it was widespread, but the groups involved were the least able to organise politically: workers with rural ties, generally unskilled; officials in state apparatuses whose careers were already under threat from staffing cuts; students again, the withdrawal of whose support is seldom a problem for determined politicians.

This brings us back to the second question, that of popular pressure. It is clear that the oppositions lacked the kind of support which could affect the outcome of their struggle against the leadership majority. But the role of the masses beyond the Kremlin or Moscow party elites cannot simply be dismissed. Stalin's victory was not achieved by democratic means, but the relationship between leadership and rank and file was nonetheless significant. For much of the 1920s the Bolsheviks had failed to address the concerns of most Moscow workers. Unemployment, food shortages, a housing crisis, and the regime's apparent heedlessness, all contributed to the growing gulf between regime and people. Revolutionary optimism was evaporating in the heat of economic and social crisis. Most problematic of all, the Bolsheviks appeared to have made endless concessions to the peasant, while the urban population suffered setback after setback. Stalin's proposals of 1928, at least in the general terms in which they were widely understood, came as a breath of fresh hope in this atmosphere of disillusionment. As in 1917, when the aspirations of Bolsheviks and workers harmonised for a brief but crucial few months, 1928 saw a temporary intersection between the hopes and desires of sections of the Moscow working class and the half-formulated policies of the party leadership.

But unlike the Bolsheviks of 1917, Stalin did not require a revolutionary army in 1928. The masses' enthusiasm was not as directly

instrumental in his victory as it had been in the period of Revolution and Civil War. Indeed, it would be hard to prove that popular pressure had any significant role in 1928. By affirming the Stalinist line, it no doubt strengthened the resolve of members of the Stalinist faction. But at the same time Rightists like Bukharin were equally convinced of the importance of their policies. The most that can be said with certainty about the role of enthusiasm 'from below' in 1928 was that the defeat of the Right did not involve massive manipulation of public opinion by apparatus politicians. Votes against Uglanov and his colleagues at *raion* and cell meetings were more likely than not to be in good faith.

It was after the Moscow Right's defeat that support from sections of the urban workforce became crucial. For rapid industrialisation required thousands of dedicated cadres, little short, indeed, of a revolutionary army. The sacrifices demanded by the leadership were made with varying degrees of enthusiasm and for different reasons, but it is undeniable that many thousands of people gave time and effort to industrialisation for little immediate material reward. Stalin's victory would have been hollow without their support. It would be very difficult to prove that he took this into account at the time of Uglanov's defeat. It is more likely that his supporters in the lower ranks of the party, the people who, like Bauman, believed in the broad policies of 'socialist offensive', needed the reassurance provided by widespread proletarian approval before they were prepared to act, but even this is not easy to document. What is beyond question, however, is that the rank and file contributed to the implementation of Stalin's policies after 1928. There is no doubt that their enthusiasm, however brutal its consequences in many instances, was indispensable to the Stalinist 'great turn'.

### 3 Bauman and the Crisis over Collectivisation, 1929–30

Moscow's political instability did not end with Uglanov's demotion. The following winter saw a different kind of crisis, this time the result of excessive zeal for current policies. Like the whole history of collectivisation, the events of 1929–30 in Moscow are still poorly documented.<sup>1</sup> But the broad outlines of the crisis are clear, and more details may be available in future if the sources have survived. Collectivisation in the Moscow region was carried out at an alarmingly rapid rate, even by the standards of the time. The Moscow leadership, scrapping earlier plans for a phased campaign, pushed the province forward into line with the priority collectivisation areas.<sup>2</sup> They may also have resisted the slow-down called for in Stalin's article, 'Dizziness with success',<sup>3</sup> of March 1930.<sup>4</sup> The impetus for the excesses came mainly, but not exclusively, from the MK. Local secretaries in the *okrugs* also played a part in forcing the pace. When the policy was formally abandoned in April, Bauman, the new Moscow party secretary, was removed, and with him over one hundred *okrug*-level party officials.<sup>5</sup>

Bauman's enthusiasm for the programme was considerable. His speeches up to 1929 had consistently shown him to be an advocate of sterner measures in the countryside. His career was in many ways a preparation for the Moscow campaign of 1929–30. He encouraged local officials to compete with each other in February 1930, helping to whip up a pace unequalled even in the priority grain areas. But other factors contributed to the crisis. First, undoubtedly, official reaction against the Right encouraged redoubled zeal for new campaigns. Survivors of the anti-Right campaign were generally committed to rapid change in both industry and agriculture.<sup>6</sup> This was true both for MK secretaries and for local officials. Many of the latter no doubt hedged their bets in 1928, leaving the way open for unfriendly critics to accuse them of Rightist sympathies. The 1929–30 campaign gave them a chance to clear their names. When the Moscow leadership was so enthusiastic, it would have been fatal to have appeared to be dragging their feet. And other considerations, such as personal animosity towards individual farmers, resentment against prosperous kulaks or against peasants they

viewed as backward, sullen and hostile, weighed in many cases. Added to this was the vanguardism generated by Moscow's status as the capital, and the revanchist enthusiasm of some Moscow workers. Finally, Moscow was the capital, a fact of which both leaders and rank and file were aware.<sup>7</sup> The consciousness that it was a national showpiece affected the tenor of the campaign, especially after a period when the Moscow leadership had failed to put the capital in the forefront of change.

The chief among these causes was almost certainly the attitude of the MK leadership. It is true that this was influenced by interaction with other institutions and groups. But it was mainly determined by the preferences of individual politicians, including the new first secretary. Karl Yanovich Bauman, the son of Latvian peasants, was born in Lifliand *guberniya* in 1892. In 1906 he joined the Social Democratic group at the Pskov agricultural school, affiliating himself with its Bolshevik wing.<sup>8</sup> According to his Soviet biographer,<sup>9</sup> he displayed great leadership qualities from this early stage, and was the organiser of a local circle by 1910. After several terms in prison, during which he read widely, he succeeded in getting a place at the Kiev Institute of Commerce, where he was among the best students of his generation. While Uglanov, fishing for sympathy at the October Joint Plenum, declared that he was 'not a Red Professor, but Nikolai Uglanov, who did only four years at a rural school', Bauman had a degree in economics, specialised in price theory, and began his career in banking, becoming a senior official in Gosbank for a short period after the Revolution.

A series of misfortunes drove him from Kiev during the Civil War. A bout of pneumonia in 1919 sent him back to his parents for several months, though he returned to the Ukrainian capital to manage the National Bank. Later that year, however, he contracted spotted typhus while fleeing Denikin's troops, and again took leave from party affairs with his parents in the Kursk *guberniya*. This time he stayed for four years, working as a secretary of the *guberniya* party committee and leading the campaign against kulak grain hoarders in the area.<sup>10</sup> In 1923 he moved to Moscow to work in the Central Committee apparatus. He served first as deputy head of the Central Committee cadres (*raspred*) department, and then, from 1924, as head of the organisation department of the MK. This *orgraspred* background suggests that he was a protégé of Stalin's from an early stage. In 1928 he moved back to the Central Committee, this time as the head of the department for rural affairs (*otdel po rabote v derevne*), although he remained a member of the MK

buro. His differences with Uglanov have already been noted (see p. 44, above). A precocious advocate of the 'socialist offensive', he was the ideal antidote to Rightism in Moscow. In November 1928, when Uglanov lost his post in Moscow, Bauman was promoted to the second secretaryship under Molotov. In April 1929 he took on the first secretaryship, presumably after satisfying Molotov that he was a suitable candidate for the post.<sup>11</sup> In one of his first speeches as first secretary, Bauman attacked the 'vestiges of capitalism' in Moscow, and called for a campaign to root them out.<sup>12</sup> His brief tenure of office thereafter was to be characterised by official MK hostility to both Nepmen and private landholding. The drive against the Nepmen was criticised and suppressed by the Central Committee in February 1930. Undaunted, Bauman led the Moscow organisation in its all-out collectivisation campaign.

Less is known about the backgrounds of other leading MK officials. The generation appointed in 1928–9 to replace the sacked Right deviationists did not remain in Moscow for long, and nearly all disappeared in the Purges. Apart from brief biographical pieces in the Moscow press when they were appointed, there is little material available about them. F. G. Leonov replaced Ryutin as secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* in October 1928<sup>13</sup>. There is almost no information about his background except that he joined the party in 1914 and was a metalworker (*slesar'*) by profession. However, he must have been a senior official before his appointment to the most prestigious *raikom* in Moscow. He was promoted to the third secretaryship of the MK in April 1929, becoming second secretary in January 1930. His involvement in the collectivisation campaign was intimate, although retribution was delayed in his case.<sup>14</sup> At the January 1930 MK plenum, the first at which 'erroneous' resolutions regarding collectivisation rates were approved, Leonov was the main speaker on collectivisation and the spring sowing campaign.<sup>15</sup> Later, when Bauman had been removed, Leonov was made responsible for explaining the MK's errors, initially after the fourth (April) plenum, and then at the second *oblast'* conference in June 1930.<sup>16</sup>

The other leading officials in January 1930 were P. E. Zaitsev, the head of the rural department, and I. L. Bulat, who succeeded Polonskii as head of the organisation department. Bulat had been secretary of the Tula *gubkom*, Zaitsev had previously headed the Zamoskvorech'e *raikom* *orgaspredotdel*. Both were removed from the MK before the June 1930 *oblast'* conference. One figure disappeared during the crisis itself. Polonskii, who had spearheaded the campaign against Uglanov, nonetheless complained that he was under pressure from Ordzhonikidze.

The latter had made a speech at the April 1929 Central Committee plenum which was construed as a criticism of Polonskii's behaviour during the Uglanov crisis. Ordzhonikidze wrote to the Moscow *oblast'* conference in September 1929 denying that the criticism had been intentional and supporting Polonskii's 'correct' line.<sup>17</sup> But some kind of conflict between Ordzhonikidze and Polonskii undoubtedly remained. Perhaps because of this, the loyal Stalinist was moved out of Moscow. At the January MK plenum his 'promotion' to work in the central apparatus of the Central Council of Trades Unions was confirmed.<sup>18</sup> 'Promotion' into the central apparatus became a common method of dealing with political miscreants in the early 1930s.<sup>19</sup> But Polonskii spent only a few weeks in the new job, and was transferred to the Azerbaijan republic as party first secretary later in 1930<sup>20</sup>.

### THE ATTACK ON THE 'BOURGEOISIE'

The Bauman leadership was ultimately brought down by its collectivisation policy. But the winter of 1929–30 also saw a campaign to eliminate the 'urban bourgeoisie' in Moscow. Included in this category were obvious 'parasites', such as speculators in scarce commodities, but also small-scale entrepreneurs, including café proprietors, street traders and providers of services.<sup>21</sup> More controversially the MK also discriminated against small-scale manufacturers, often including craftsmen (*kustari*). Like the radical peasant policy, the anti-'bourgeois' theme had been consistent under Bauman's leadership. In a speech of February 1929 he equated the Nepman with the 'kulak-spider'.<sup>22</sup> Private enterprise of all kinds was condemned. Private trade in particular was attacked. It could take many forms. *Vechernyaya Moskva*, denouncing a doctor who encouraged patients to buy scarce medicines from him privately, concluded with a call to 'attack the *chastnik* [private entrepreneur] on this front'<sup>23</sup> as well as in more familiar fields.

In this area, as with collectivisation, Moscow's 'error' was one of timing and scale. Stalin's utterances on private enterprise, especially after 1928, gave reasonable grounds for thinking an all-out attack might be justified. Though he maintained that the danger from the 'Left' continued to threaten the stability of NEP, by April 1929 Stalin's line was that 'the danger from the Right' was more real.<sup>24</sup> And in the wake of the Uglanov affair, the new Moscow leadership was ready to take Stalin's words at their face value. Moreover, the 'Left excess' of pressurising the *chastnik* was not confined to Moscow.<sup>25</sup> Central directives, whether from Stalin or the relevant Central Committee



departments, were vague, contradictory and unhelpful on details. Generally speaking, the precise limits of policy were determined only when a local organisation blundered so seriously that a reaction from the centre was essential. The Stalinist leadership, which issued statements declaring class war<sup>26</sup> and even specifically attacking private entrepreneurs, without stipulating clearly where the limits lay, must bear much of the responsibility for the errors of the Bauman regime.

What happened in Moscow is poorly documented. The press did not carry reports of Nepmen being arrested or thrown out on to the street. And the later speeches of Moscow's leaders, notably Leonov, while recognising that 'errors' – the confusion of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class with the liquidation of the whole of the new bourgeoisie<sup>27</sup> – had been committed, went into no details. The official Soviet history of the Moscow party organisation does not even mention the campaign.<sup>28</sup> Memoirs of the period offer more help. Nepmen, already under pressure because of the cutting off of supplies from the countryside (the result of Stalin's 'extraordinary measures'), were now taxed punitively. A slightly lower, but nonetheless confiscatory rate of taxation was levied on small-scale handicraftsmen.<sup>29</sup> Raids were carried out even on former Nepmen, leaving them suddenly in the street with only the clothes they stood up in.<sup>30</sup> As one American reporter in Moscow recalled,

There were days in which tens of thousands of 'speculators' were arrested, imprisoned or driven from the cities: harried creatures, denied respectable employment by law, who sold toothpicks, homemade garments, second-hand boots, stale hunks of bread, a little sunflower seed oil, in the private markets. Further revisions of living space were ordered in Moscow and elsewhere, so that former Nepmen and other class enemies, whether eight years old or eighty, might be expelled from their cramped quarters.<sup>31</sup>

At first the Moscow policy seemed to have official backing at the highest level. It was Kalinin who told a meeting of the Moscow Soviet on 26 December 1929 that private trade in Moscow had virtually been eliminated<sup>32</sup>. Later accounts of the Moscow leadership's 'errors' date the beginning of their deviation to the January 1930 MK plenum. In his speech there, Bauman identified the main task of the moment as the 'liquidation of kulaks and the new bourgeoisie as a whole, as a class, in the Soviet state'.<sup>33</sup> This assault on the 'urban bourgeoisie' was condemned by Stalin in person. Speaking to the students of Sverdlov University on 9 February, he attacked people in 'some of our organisations' who had 'attempted to "supplement" the slogan of the

liquidation of the kulaks as a class with the slogan of the liquidation of the urban bourgeoisie'.<sup>34</sup> The Nepman, he argued, had long since become 'superfluous' economically, and posed no threat to the regime. By contrast, the kulak had to be liquidated because he still had 'an enormous economic significance.'

A few days later the MK issued a revised resolution, in which the phrases dealing with Nepmen were considerably diluted. By June it was this aspect of Bauman's regime, and not the collectivisation campaign, which had come to be seen as the most mistaken. A number of speeches at the second *oblast'* conference referred to the excesses committed against private entrepreneurs, attacking the MK's error of grouping together the kulak and the whole of the new bourgeoisie.<sup>35</sup> The resolution on the main MK report also identified the mistake.<sup>36</sup> But no details were given. At a time when 'excesses' in the countryside were featuring regularly in party discussions, this reticence about the attack on the 'urban bourgeoisie' is hard to explain except ominously.

#### COLLECTIVISATION IN THE MOSCOW PROVINCE, SEPTEMBER 1929–APRIL 1930

The collectivisation crisis, like the attack on the Nepmen, was a matter of mistiming and excessive zeal. For various reasons, especially the fact that it was not a major grain producing area, the Moscow *oblast'* was not, in 1929, among the front runners in the campaign to collectivise private farms in the USSR.<sup>37</sup> But the Moscow leadership was determined to push collectivisation through, even in a province where grain-production was insignificant. In June 1929 Bauman announced that a quarter of peasant households in the Moscow *oblast'* should be collectivised in the next five years.<sup>38</sup> Only with hindsight could this goal have been regarded as 'moderate'. As Bauman boasted in January 1930, many regarded the initial target as unrealistic.<sup>39</sup> But by February 1930 the summer and autumn of 1929 must have looked like a golden age of moderation. Moscow had moved from twenty-first place in the national league table of collectivised households to the top six.<sup>40</sup>

The bulk of the campaign was concentrated in the six weeks following the January 1930 joint MK and MKK plenum. It was then that Bauman announced the abandonment of the 25 per cent target, declaring that 40 per cent of households in the *oblast'* as a whole, and 100 per cent in Ryazan' *okrug*, were to be collectivised by the end of the current sowing season.<sup>41</sup> The process was conceived as a military-style campaign, and

rapidly claimed large numbers of casualties. Bauman admitted that 603 'counter-revolutionary acts' had already occurred in the *oblast*, involving the deaths of 19 Communists and the wounding of a further 82. According to Bauman, 76 'class enemies' had been shot in retribution.<sup>42</sup> These figures may well have been inaccurate, either because Bauman was deliberately understating the problem, or because precise information could not be obtained in the chaotic conditions of 1930. Either way, by March the number would undoubtedly have increased considerably.

After the January plenum, even the relatively low figure of 40 per cent was abandoned. As a later article in *Rabochaya Moskva* admitted, the Moscow leadership set about obtaining full collectivisation by the end of the current spring sowing.<sup>43</sup> 'Excesses' and 'errors' inevitably followed. Among the 'errors' to which the editors of *Rabochaya Moskva* thought fit to admit, significant but no doubt mild by comparison with most, was the order in one *okrug* issued to shopkeepers that they should sell alcohol only to collective farmers.<sup>44</sup> Such errors were unavoidable in conditions where the effectiveness of a local party organisation was judged solely on the percentage of collectivised households. Throughout February *Rabochaya Moskva* treated the exercise as a competition, and ran a series of league tables on the progress of the campaign.<sup>45</sup>

Much of the 'collectivisation' which occurred in this period was formal rather than real; villages were declared 'collectivised' whether or not consultations had taken place between officials and the local peasants. The secretary of one *raikom* in the Tula area telegraphed that 'on the night of 4/5 February, the landless, poor and middle peasant masses of the countryside were collectivised to 100 per cent'.<sup>46</sup> And compulsion was used in the majority of cases. When the brakes were applied in March 1930, the number of collectivised households dropped rapidly.<sup>47</sup> Thousands of peasants left the collectives as soon as the opportunity arose.

The excesses of the MK's kulak policy contrast with Bauman's apparent moderation on the issue the previous autumn. As chairman of the Politburo subcommission on the fate of the kulak, he probably argued for leniency, recommending that in most cases the kulaks should be allowed to remain on the collective farms, at least for a probationary period.<sup>48</sup> The recommendations of the Bauman subcommission were overturned by Stalin himself. As he explained in his speech to the All-Union Conference of Marxist Agrarians in December 1929,

Dekulakisation is now an essential element in forming and developing the *kolkhozy*.<sup>49</sup> Therefore to keep on discussing dekulakisation is

ridiculous and not serious. When the head is cut off you do not weep for the hair.

Another question seems no less ridiculous: can the kulak be admitted into the *kolkhoz*? Of course it is wrong to admit the kulak into the *kolkhoz*. It is wrong because he is an accursed enemy of the *kolkhoz* movement.<sup>50</sup>

But Bauman espoused the anti-kulak line with great enthusiasm in his own province. His relative moderation on the Politburo subcommission must be seen in the context of his other pronouncements. He was one of the first people to use the phrase 'liquidation of the kulaks as a class'.<sup>51</sup> In September 1929 he announced a 'struggle to the death' in the countryside and declared Nepmen and kulaks to be in league with the 'class enemy abroad'.<sup>52</sup> At the January plenum he called for 'the annihilation of the kulaks as a class', demanding their expropriation and expulsion from the collective farms. The task would be a major one, as 'kulaks', in Bauman's view, held 13 000 farms in the *oblast*.<sup>53</sup> This was an artificial figure; it was never clear precisely who was a kulak and who merely a better-off middle peasant. Moreover, many of the campaign's victims were clearly not wealthy peasants by any definition. In one area two teachers who had formerly served in the Red Army and two septuagenarian agronomists were 'de-kulakised', excess typical of the *oblast* as a whole.<sup>54</sup>

The official Soviet account places the blame for 'excesses' firmly at the MK's door.<sup>55</sup> The view is not entirely without foundation, especially in Bauman's case. His encouragement to ever-faster tempos was consistent.<sup>56</sup> A more scrupulous reader of the available sources suggests, however, that responsibility lay partly with the Politburo leadership. Its confusion, especially in late January and early February, left the way open for different interpretations of the campaign at the local level.<sup>57</sup> But even this reading is too generous towards the Central Committee. For throughout the campaign its resolutions could not be read literally, so that 'deviations' of all kinds were inevitable. Even if official pronouncements claimed to restore the 'voluntary principle' in theory, for example, the fact was that few peasants would have joined collectives without some kind of compulsion. Very little that was said or written during collectivisation could be taken at face value. Judging by the tone of the press, which failed to mirror the gradual softening of leadership attitudes in early February, there was little to reproach in Moscow's enthusiastic line.

On the other hand, Bauman was among the best-informed politicians in the Soviet Union where the collectivisation campaign was concerned.

If anyone knew how to interpret 'signals', whether in the form of secret telegrams or rumours in the Kremlin, it should have been he. It is possible that he chose to ignore them, or that as a senior policy-maker in agricultural affairs, he wished to provide an example of the 'ideal' method. There is some evidence to suppose that he ignored warnings from the Central Committee leadership about the need for circumspection in non-priority areas.<sup>58</sup> But even so, it cannot be alleged that the MK acted without Central Committee connivance. Moscow was hardly Eastern Siberia. Stalin must have been aware of what was going on in the province. It was the area around the capital city, its fate was described daily in the local press, and its political leader, a member of the Politburo with particular responsibility for agricultural questions, must have been in frequent personal contact with him. The press campaign in Moscow was not criticised until February 22, and even then not in a widely-circulated national paper<sup>59</sup>. As Krupskaya later alleged, from March 1930 the Central Committee attempted to blame local officials for its own mistakes.<sup>60</sup> Chief among these was the marked absence of an agreed policy during the early months of 1930.

The party leadership, including members of the Politburo and the Moscow Committee, must thus take much of the blame for the crisis in the Moscow province. But it cannot be held exclusively responsible. Even before the January plenum, conflict between peasants and local officials in the province had been spiralling steadily. Battle lines were being drawn up between rural communities and party officials. As the campaign intensified, so the resistance, often violent, of villagers increased. According to Polonskii, 'kulaks' in one village crucified a peasant who advocated collectivisation in the late summer, a measure to which the authorities responded by shooting a number of suspects in the area.<sup>61</sup> And the official account of the Podol'sk affair also suggested that party rank and filers in the countryside opposed the proposed new course. The first Moscow *oblast'* conference heard that activists in the machine factory in Podol'sk, a town a little to the south-east of Moscow, had invited Kalinin to address a meeting. A number of 'kulak' workers there, landholders from the district, had been influencing their comrades against collectivisation. The idea was to use the allegedly popular 'peasant' member of the Politburo to improve the political atmosphere in the factory. But Kalinin was shouted down at the meeting, and was forced to sit and listen to an attack on current party policy from the same 'kulak' elements. 'Party members in the factory sat and were silent' throughout. At the same factory workers defended two 'kulaks' in the workforce who were about

to be expelled from the trade union, again without protest from the party members present.<sup>62</sup>

Caught between often violent peasant resistance and the MK's pressure to increase collectivisation rates, local officials in the *okrugs* resorted to whatever tactics were available. Pressing a violent and unpopular campaign, the more violence they encountered, the more they were prepared to employ in return. The same applied to the proletarian party activists. The campaign to create a socialist countryside received enthusiastic support in many factories. Some, like *Elektrozavod*, 'adopted' collectivisation areas, sending equipment, money and personnel to help establish the new farms. The language employed was comradely enough, but the reality was often brutal. Two *Elektrozavod* workers were shot in separate incidents in December 1929 at the 'Elektrozavod' collective farm. After the first shooting, another worker from the factory wrote back to his comrades that 'the carrying out of full collectivisation of the poor and middle peasants and the grain collections which have been overfulfilled here' was not achieved 'without a struggle. Sometimes it is done with revolver and whip in hand.'<sup>63</sup>

These 'excesses' were echoed all over the Soviet Union in the first two months of 1930. But in Moscow the official enthusiasm for speed at any price was unusually great. The publication of 'Dizziness with success' in *Pravda*<sup>64</sup> gave the Moscow leadership pause, but its first reaction was to blame local officials. Articles in *Rabochaya Moskva* in early March called for the restoration of the 'voluntary principle', the consolidation of existing collective farms and the exposure of the 'excesses' of the previous two months.<sup>65</sup> The MK leadership itself was not criticised. The same line was taken at the third MK plenum, which opened in Moscow on 26 March.

This plenum contrasted sharply in atmosphere with the January session. The peasants so hastily 'collectivised' were by this time leaving the collectives in droves. The number of collectivised households in the *oblast'* had fallen from 74.1 per cent on 1 March to 12.5 per cent by 1 April.<sup>66</sup> In his speech, Bauman denounced the 'leftist excesses' of the recent past. The plenum's resolution called for a reduction in the size of the collective farms, so that they would approximate to the existing villages.<sup>67</sup> But it was the local officials who were ordered to correct their mistakes.<sup>68</sup> At this stage the MK was following the Central Committee's example in passing responsibility for the excesses down the line to people who could not defend themselves.

This situation was not to last. Bauman's removal followed in April. It took the form of his resignation, approved at the fourth MK plenum.

Unlike Uglanov, who had opposed Stalin's policies, Bauman, who had merely interpreted them too vigorously, was not personally attacked. The MK's own 'errors' were recognised at this stage, but Bauman was not denounced. Leonov carefully avoided personal recriminations in his speech on recent errors.<sup>69</sup> And Bauman was soon back in the newspapers, giving his opinion on the food procurement campaign.<sup>70</sup> He remained a member of the Central Committee's *orgburo*.<sup>71</sup> Press reports of the second Moscow *oblast'* conference in June did not mention Bauman by name in their accounts of the crisis, and the 'Leftist excesses' of his regime were described as less dangerous than the 'Right deviation'.<sup>72</sup> Nonetheless, most of the people closely implicated in the affair were eventually removed. Leonov was moved to the Central Committee *orgburo* in July, a quiet demotion which kept him out of the public eye.<sup>73</sup> The fate of the numerous local officials in the *oblast'* who were removed after March 1930 is less certain.<sup>74</sup>

## 4 Kaganovich's Party Organisation, 1930–2

Bauman was the last leader of the MK to be attacked for deviating from the Stalinist line. After 1930 there would be no more organised opposition at the top level, and no further incidence of outstanding creativity on the part of supposedly 'loyal' Stalinists. Central control of the Moscow party elite, if not of the *aktiv*, had never been tighter. But the MK's prestige needed a boost if confidence in it were to be restored. A tough and reliable administrator was needed for the capital, and preferably someone who had no personal link with the city. L. M. Kaganovich<sup>1</sup> was an obvious choice. A trusted colleague of Stalin, already regarded as a troubleshooter,<sup>2</sup> he was known for his enthusiasm for the more optimistic versions of the plan, as well as for his ruthlessness in overseeing their implementation.<sup>3</sup> Under his secretaryship the people who favoured maximalist planning were encouraged, the Central Committee itself approving an ambitious plan for the physical transformation of the city of Moscow in 1931. Moscow was to become a socialist capital, the centrepiece of which was to be the Moscow metro.<sup>4</sup> Heavy industry continued to receive preferential treatment, and a number of 'model' factories were projected, either on entirely new sites or on the adapted premises of old plants like *Serp i Molot* and *AMO*. The capital became a 'gigantic construction site', its leaders struggling daily to keep pace with the demands of rapid change.

Kaganovich surrounded himself with a group of loyal officials, collectively distinguished by their enthusiasm for the Plan and their energetic pursuit of its fulfilment.<sup>5</sup> Among the most important were N. S. Khrushchev, K. V. Ryndin and N. A. Bulganin. One of the few 'new' Bolsheviks on the MK before 1932 (unlike the great majority, who were 'undergrounders' from pre-Revolutionary days, he had joined the party in 1918), Khrushchev rose through the party's ranks in record time. As a student at the Industrial Academy in Bauman *raion*, he participated in the removal of a 'Right' group in 1929–30, and was picked to represent the Academy at the Bauman *raion* conference in May 1930. In January 1931 he replaced A. P. Shirin<sup>6</sup> as secretary of Bauman *raikom*, and six months later replaced I. I. Kozlov<sup>7</sup> as secretary of the prestigious Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*. The most important break came in January 1932, when Khrushchev was made second secretary



of the Moscow City Committee (*gorkom*),<sup>8</sup> replacing K. V. Ryndin. Khrushchev's account of his promotion suggests at least two good reasons for his meteoric rise. First, he was Kaganovich's 'client', noticed in the Ukraine and promoted from the mid-1920s onwards. Second, he was unswervingly loyal to the Stalinist leadership. His antipathy to all forms of opposition, as officially defined, was genuine. Like many other 'new' Bolsheviks, promoted in the 1920s, he believed that the party majority was right, and that practical progress demanded the suppression of personal and factional considerations. He was not brow-beaten into following Stalin's line, in other words, but did so from conviction.<sup>9</sup>

K. V. Ryndin's career was more conventional. An 'underground' from the Urals (he joined the party in 1915), he had participated in the October Revolution and the Civil War.<sup>10</sup> In 1923, when he was 30, he chaired his first major party committee, in the Zlatoust *uezd*. From 1923 to 1929 he moved around almost annually, first within the Urals area, and then as a Central Committee instructor.<sup>11</sup> He was brought to Moscow as secretary of the *oblast'* Control Commission to revive the purge campaign in September 1929.<sup>12</sup> This he did by toughening up the rhetoric on the one hand and narrowing down the targets on the other.

The revised targets, not surprisingly in the circumstances of the time, were 'only' the 'financial and agrarian organisations'.<sup>13</sup> Kaganovich lost little time in transferring Ryndin to the MK. He became head of the organisation-instruction section and third MK secretary in June 1930.<sup>14</sup> The following month, when Leonov was removed, he took over as Kaganovich's deputy.<sup>15</sup> When the city and province were separated, Ryndin remained second secretary of the *obkom*. In view of Kaganovich's other preoccupations, this was a powerful position, which gave Ryndin *de facto* control over party affairs in the province on a day-to-day basis.<sup>16</sup>

Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bulganin joined the party in 1917 and won his revolutionary spurs in the Nizhnii-Novgorod Cheka. From 1922–7 he worked in VSNKh, moving on to become the first director of the prestigious Elektrozavod factory in Moscow and a director of State Electrical Trust, GET. In 1931 he replaced Ukhanov as chairman of the Moscow Soviet, a post which he was to hold until 1937.<sup>17</sup>

Staunch loyalty to Stalin was the characteristic of all these men. Like almost all the MK's hundred or so members, they were not Muscovites, but politicians of proven talent brought in from the regions, often after spells working in the central party or state apparatus. As MK secretaries, their power would increase in the next three or four years. The MK's

composition changed. The number of local representatives from the factories and trade unions was reduced (see appendix 3). At the same time Central Committee representation on it increased significantly, so that by 1934 its membership list included virtually all the current Politburo.<sup>18</sup> Such senior politicians could not participate directly in Moscow's affairs. So the burden of administration fell more heavily on the shoulders of the local party secretaries. These people were the direct subordinates of the central secretariat, constantly at the mercy of memoranda from Stalin's office, or of telephone calls from the leader himself.<sup>19</sup> Such calls came thick and fast; this was a time when Stalin took particular interest in the capital. As one historian notes, 'It was not Kaganovich but Stalin who played the decisive role and had the last say in the plans for the reconstruction of Moscow, and no large building within the capital's historical centre was razed or built without his approval.'<sup>20</sup> The secretaries' hands were therefore tied, but their association with the Central Committee's powerful inner council also enhanced their status in local politics, making it easier for them to overcome the resistance of parallel bodies like local trusts or the Moscow Soviet. Local influence over Moscow politics was reduced as the power and prestige of its Stalinist party secretaries grew.

Whatever the resolve of its new leadership, however, Stalinist Moscow, in line with the rest of the USSR, was to endure three years of intense economic crisis. The situation was grave however it was viewed. Production, the prime object of the plan, continued to increase, but its rate of growth declined. Despite huge levels of investment, financed by pressure on the peasants and by sharp reductions in consumption, industrial growth did not meet the optimistic projections set out for it. Agriculture fared even worse. The slaughter of livestock in 1929-32 caused long-term hardship. In particular, the shortage of draft power on the collective farms exacerbated the poor harvests of 1931-3.<sup>21</sup> For Moscow's inhabitants, all this spelled food and housing shortages,<sup>22</sup> reductions in real wages,<sup>23</sup> increases in working hours and, from 1932, harsher penalties for shortcomings such as absenteeism from work, poor time-keeping and pilfering from the workplace.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, as many Muscovites would know at first hand, the countryside entered a period of famine during which, as Stalin himself is said to have admitted, at least twenty-five or thirty million rural dwellers starved,<sup>25</sup> several million of whom perished.<sup>26</sup> Although relatively privileged by comparison with the countryside and provincial cities, Moscow workers reacted sharply to the hardships. Strikes were recorded in the capital in 1930, 1931 and 1932, usually provoked by

wage cuts or food shortages.<sup>27</sup> The official Soviet press said little about them, but abroad the Menshevik journal *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* printed regular reports charting the growing discontent.<sup>28</sup>

There were no simple solutions to the problems piling up by 1930. Conflicting proposals inevitably followed. Differences of opinion within the leadership seem to have continued despite the growing emphasis on public unity. But the lower levels in the party knew less about their leaders' discussions. By contrast with the 1920s, conflicts within the ruling elite were made to appear as uncontroversial as possible. Reluctant to break ranks and advertise its own insecurity, the Stalinist leadership presented a united front in the press and in its public speeches. *Rabochaya Moskva*, which once printed prompt reports of the debates at MK plenums, as well as verbatim copies of the main speeches, now limited itself to a few lines, often weeks after the plenum had taken place. The change in the press was not isolated. Even the debates printed in stenographic reports grew stilted after 1930. Decisions were taken in advance of the set-piece Moscow party conferences, well away from scrutiny by the public, or even by the party rank and file. Sudden, laconic announcements were often the only official indication of controversy in the leadership.<sup>29</sup> Those who criticised current or past policy did so at considerable risk. Although many Politburo members – including Ordzhonikidze, Kirov and Kuibyshev<sup>30</sup> – were rumoured to be alarmed by aspects of current policy, they confined their worries to oblique remarks when in public. The climate of discipline had become so oppressive that even 'Stalinist' politicians could be attacked if they spoke out too openly against the current course.<sup>31</sup>

As well as throwing the leadership into confusion, the hardships and errors of the first Five Year Plan, especially after the initial euphoria had worn off in the summer of 1929, provided opposition groups with plenty of material. By 1932, indeed, there were signs that disaffected groups of all persuasions might be prepared to co-operate to remove Stalin and repair some of the damage done in four years of rapid change. A stream of largely unco-ordinated criticism issued from the Right. Various tendencies developed during the four-year period. Specific excesses provoked sporadic criticism at the top level from erstwhile 'Stalinists' like S. I. Syrtsov. Lower down, supporters of the Bukharinist Right remained sceptical of the changes, although they seldom, if ever, organised formally.<sup>32</sup> The sources say little about the extent of their activities, and claims that 'groups' had been 'unmasked' are unreliable. However, rank and file critics of the new course continued to meet, and occasionally discussed schemes for modifying current policy.

In 1929–30 a group formed among students in the Industrial Academy in Bauman *raion*. It is difficult to judge the accuracy of much of the evidence about it – already falsification, as in the case of the ‘Industrial Party’,<sup>33</sup> was becoming a habit among the people who controlled the press. In this case, however, Khrushchev’s memoirs confirm that there was a rightist organisation of some kind in the Academy. As he put it, ‘when I first came to Moscow in 1929, the student body at the Academy was full of unstable and undesirable elements .... They did nothing but loaf.’<sup>34</sup> Worse, because, in Khrushchev’s view, only ‘disloyal’ elements had the leisure to study, ‘the Industrial Academy was teeming with Rightists, and they’d got control of the party cell’.<sup>35</sup>

This was the ‘Rightist group’ which *Rabochaya Moskva* described in November 1929, a group whose ‘links reached out far beyond’ the Academy’s walls. The article claimed that the group had been ‘unmasked’. Although the cell was described as ‘disorientated’ as a result of the affair, readers could expect that its political activities would no longer give rise to official concern.<sup>36</sup> But it surfaced again in May 1930. *Rabochaya Moskva* wrote that a renewed assault by the ‘Right’ group was beginning, blaming the ‘complacency’ of the cell secretary, Khakharev, and calling on the Bauman *raikom* to increase its vigilance where the Academy was concerned.<sup>37</sup> Khrushchev’s remembered account of the affair went further. He accused Khakharev of heading an ‘Old Guard ... who supported the rights Rykov, Bukharin and Uglanov against Stalin and the General Line of the Party’.<sup>38</sup> Khrushchev detected a clash of generations in the conflict at this level. The new recruits, those who had joined since the Revolution, were united in their enthusiasm for the current course, but their relative youth marked them out as a group. ‘Stalin’s supporters in the Academy had all joined since the Revolution,’ he wrote, and could thus be ‘recognised and voted down’ by the leadership.<sup>39</sup> The ‘old guard’s’ motive was apparently to propose a slate of delegates from Bauman *raikom* to the Moscow conference which would include Rightists like Rykov and Bukharin as well as Stalin. The Stalinists’ reaction pre-empted any such move. The ‘old guard’ were removed from the Academy on the eve of the Bauman *raion* conference in May 1930. Among the replacement delegates, appointed ‘so hurriedly that there wasn’t even time to print new credentials’, was Khrushchev, who subsequently became secretary of Bauman *raikom* himself.<sup>40</sup>

A more outspoken attack on the leadership – perhaps the most sensational of the period – came from M. N. Ryutin, the former secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, between 1930 and 1932. Ryutin had

criticised Stalin to his face in 1928.<sup>41</sup> But the 'Ryutin platform' of 1932 was a comprehensive indictment, running to almost two hundred pages and covering both Stalin's person and his policies.<sup>42</sup> Appearing at the height of the crisis in 1932, it spared no aspect of the leadership's misconduct. But unlike earlier opposition statements, it was almost completely suppressed. The official attitude towards the 1932 crisis was to pretend that all was well; the press was full of accounts of successes and improvements. To have the truth so bluntly stated would have been very damaging. By 1932 it was possible to silence a critic like Ryutin. Opposition groups could no longer form easily, and they had no access to the media. So from the time of its appearance until 1988, little was known about the 'Ryutin platform's' contents. No copy of it was available and scarcely any evidence for the existence of a 'Ryutin group' could be found.<sup>43</sup> Stalin's policy in this case was 'not only to downgrade, crush, annihilate, but also to eliminate from memory, erase all evidence of the existence of the objectionable person'.<sup>44</sup> Only recently, as part of the *glasnost* policy, have parts of Ryutin's critique been published, first in a short article in the journal, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, and more recently in the revived party monthly, *Izvestiya Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS*.<sup>45</sup> Both sources quote from the shorter appeal 'To all members of the Communist Party', in which Ryutin wrote that

The party and the dictatorship of the proletariat have been led into an unknown blind alley by Stalin and his retinue and are now living through a mortally dangerous crisis. With the help of deception and slander, with the help of unbelievable pressures and terror, Stalin in the last five years has sifted out and removed from the leadership all the best, genuinely Bolshevik party cadres, has established in the VKP(b) and in the whole country his personal dictatorship, has broken with Leninism, has embarked on a path of the most ungovernable adventurism and wild personal arbitrariness.<sup>46</sup>

Ryutin's criticism of the current crop of lower-level party leaders was no more favourable. Instead of the 'most honorable, principled members of the party, prepared to defend their opinions against all comers', Stalin was now promoting 'people without honour, cunning, unprincipled people, prepared to alter their convictions dozens of times at the command of the leadership, careerists, flatterers, sycophants'. The leadership itself was condemned outright.

If you were looking for an agent provocateur to destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat and to discredit Leninism, it would be

impossible to imagine a stronger or more brilliant one than the Stalinist leadership and Stalin's clique.<sup>48</sup>

Finally, at a time when the official press was full of praise for the party's economic 'victories', Ryutin condemned collectivisation and rapid industrialisation with unequivocal frankness. As he put it,

The adventurist tempos of industrialization, bringing with them a colossal fall in workers' and employees' real wages, impossibly high direct and concealed taxation, price increases and a fall in the value of the *chervonets*,<sup>49</sup> adventurist collectivisation accompanied by de-kulakisation, which in fact worked mainly against the middle and poor peasant masses in the countryside, and finally, the expropriation of the countryside by means of all kinds of extortions and forced requisitions, – have brought the country to the profoundest economic crisis, appalling impoverishment for the masses and famine . . . . The further impoverishment of the proletariat is in prospect . . . . All private interest in the running of agriculture has been killed, the incentive for labour is constraint and repressions . . . . All the young and healthy people in the countryside are fleeing, millions of people, cut off from productive work, roaming about the country, overcrowding the cities, the remaining population in the countryside is starving.<sup>50</sup>

Ryutin had been a powerful figure in Moscow politics in 1928. His fall thereafter was rapid (he was excluded from the party in 1930 for his 'treacherous double-dealing behaviour' and attempts to disseminate his 'right-opportunist opinions'<sup>51</sup>), but despite the rapid changes in Moscow society, during which many of his old contacts, if they had not actually been purged in 1928, had disappeared to jobs in the provinces, he still had high-level connections in the capital.<sup>52</sup> His 'platform' was discussed and edited by a group of middle-ranking but responsible officials, including P. A. Galkin, the director of a Moscow printworks; V. I. Demidov, who was a senior manager of the AMO factory; M. S. Ivanov, a senior official in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate; a professor from the Mining Academy called P. P. Fedorov; and the Leningrad Old Bolshevik, V. N. Kayurov, who was then working as an archivist.<sup>53</sup>

The criticisms contained in the platform allegedly attracted sympathy from both former Leftists and former Right-wingers. Among the latter was Uglanov,<sup>54</sup> and also Slepko, Maretskii and Astrov,<sup>55</sup> former protégés of Bukharin on the editorial board of *Pravda*. The most prominent of the former Leftists, Zinoviev and Kamenev, were exiled to Siberia in October 1932 for reading the platform and failing to alert

the authorities to its existence.<sup>56</sup> A number of accounts also suggest that the platform was circulated in Moscow factories.<sup>57</sup>

Ryutin's was the most outspoken criticism from a former Rightist, but it reflected the Right's consistent position on industrialisation, collectivisation and Stalin's recent tactics. Former members of the Left responded in different ways to the first Five Year Plan. Some greeted it with qualified enthusiasm, even 'capitulating' and rejoining the Bolshevik party by offering formal apologies. But others remained sceptical. 'The best way to torpedo a project', wrote Victor Serge twenty years later, 'is to get one's adversaries to implement it.'<sup>58</sup> It was hard not to welcome the implementation of parts of the Opposition's earlier programme. Even Trotsky, while condemning 'the monstrous bureaucratic methods' by which industrialisation was being achieved, applauded the 'development of the productive forces of the Soviet Union' as 'the most colossal phenomenon of contemporary history.'<sup>59</sup> But this enthusiasm quickly faded as the costs became apparent. As early as 1930, Opposition leaders were expressing doubts about the pace of change.<sup>60</sup> The condition of agriculture, and especially the famine of 1932–3, provoked widespread criticism. 'The headlong race after breaking records in collectivisation', wrote Trotsky from exile in 1932, '... has led in actuality to ruinous consequences ... The administrative pressure, which exhausts itself quickly in industry, turns out to be absolutely powerless in the sphere of the rural economy.'<sup>61</sup>

It was in these circumstances that a Trotskyist 'bloc', comprising disaffected elements of various political persuasions, may have been formed in Moscow.<sup>62</sup> The evidence for its formation comes almost entirely from recently-released documents in the Trotsky Archive.<sup>63</sup> The Trotskyists themselves later denied that it had even been planned.<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless it is probable that negotiations towards the formation of some kind of opposition bloc within the Soviet Union were carried out in the autumn of 1932, the aim of which, repeated in Trotsky's writings, was 'to carry out at last Lenin's final and insistent advice: Remove Stalin!'<sup>65</sup> This was not an outlandish goal in view of Stalin's unpopularity at the time. One of Trotsky's correspondents reported that on 23 February 1932 Stalin had been greeted at a high-level party meeting in the Bolshoi Theatre by an 'icy silence' instead of the usual 'warm applause'.<sup>66</sup> In November 1932, shortly after his wife's suicide and at about the time Trotsky's 'bloc' would have been operating, Stalin is said to have offered his resignation to the Politburo.<sup>67</sup>

The problem for any opposition, however, and for members of the elite who might have thought of removing Stalin, was the absence of

serious alternatives. The coalition between former Zinovievists and Trotskyists was short-lived.<sup>68</sup> Although Trotsky at least was initially willing to shoulder the burden of reconstructing the Soviet economy, he had very little committed support inside the country. Police repression, which was swift in the winter of 1932-3, was only part of the reason for this. There were other reasons for the widespread reluctance to take action on his behalf. Many of his potential supporters feared that he would not forgive their allegiance to Stalin in the 1920s. 'If Trotsky returns,' officials were reported as saying, 'he will shoot us all, one after the other.'<sup>69</sup> Moreover, as conditions in the Soviet Union worsened, all Bolsheviks, whether disaffected or loyal to Stalin, were afraid of a popular counter-revolution against Bolshevism itself.<sup>70</sup> The following year, when to fears of domestic insurrection was added the threat posed by the victory of Hitler's Nazi Party in Germany, even Trotsky accepted that there was no future for opposition activity in the Soviet Union.<sup>71</sup> As in the 1920s, there was little consonance between the oppositionists' aims and the discontent of the Soviet masses. Kulaks on their way to exile, peasants enduring hardship on newly-formed collective farms, raw 'workers' arriving in the cities from the country, all these groups were in constant movement, unable to express their discontent in consistent, organised ways.<sup>72</sup> The old oppositions, defeated in the 1920s and thereafter discussed in the media – posters and speeches as well as the press – as traitors to the Soviet state, must have seemed irrelevant. 'Our platform', Trotsky wrote in 1932, 'is entirely directed towards the masses. Our next tactical move must take into account the wall which separates us from them.'<sup>73</sup> But the 'wall' was never demolished, and in reality opposition leaders, drawn as they were largely from the elite, had no desire to start a new civil war. At a time when the Soviet Union's future was uncertain and its provinces scarcely governable, even the oppositionists realised that the alternative to Stalinism might easily be chaos, and possibly the Soviet Union's final collapse. The absence of organised opposition in the 1930s was not exclusively the result of official repression, and as in the 1920s the oppositionists themselves contributed to their own marginalisation.

Effective central control over a local party organisation like Moscow's meant more than the absence of opposition, however. Although there was no more effective opposition, and although the party elite was an object of awe if not yet terror to the rank and file, the documents of the period do not convey a sense of controlled government in Moscow. No one could doubt that Moscow's top party secretaries were powerful, or that Stalin's wishes demanded instant responses at all levels. Equally



clear, however, was that crisis piled upon crisis, and that the leadership had no effective response to the problems it had helped to create. The press conveys the flavour of the period clearly. The same paper might carry triumphal accounts of economic achievements – the building of one factory, the re-opening of another – and urgent demands for action to stem the ‘transport crisis’, the ‘food procurements crisis’, the problem of waste, industrial accidents, skills shortages. For its readers at the time, another anomaly would have been the absence of references to the crisis in the villages. Despite efforts to seal the cities off from migrant peasants fleeing starvation, news of what was really going on cannot have been entirely suppressed. But the papers said nothing about the problem, and official speeches, where reported, also avoided it. Arbitrariness combined with confusion describes the atmosphere of party life conveyed in 1931 and 1932 by papers like *Rabochaya Moskva*.

The same style prevailed at the lower levels of the party hierarchy. In the factories, as we shall see later, central directives appeared vague and enigmatic. There was a sense of urgency about the Plan, and about solving immediate local problems connected with it, but little in the way of solid guidance for local officials. The ‘cultural revolution’ affected all aspects of people’s lives, lending to everything except the new constructions an air of impermanence. It was unclear who was responsible for what, difficult problems could be handed on. The structure of administration, after all, might well be changed before the costs of an individual’s negligence were noticed. Powerful though the ties between Moscow and the centre had become, at the factory level responsibility for the implementation of party directives was diffused and a good deal was left to local initiative. Only in 1932 were steps taken to remedy the situation, resulting in a more streamlined party, and, as the pace of planning slackened, an easing of the economic crisis. Before 1932 the effectiveness of central government could easily have been doubted by those whose job it was to see to policy implementation in the localities.

This aspect of party life has tended to be overlooked by commentators seeking to describe the origins and development of Stalin’s dictatorship. Such changes as the suppression of opposition, the growing secrecy of the elite and the increasing power of the secretariat have generally dominated interpretative accounts. Observers at the time, such as Ryutin, described the Stalinist system as they experienced it, as a monolithic, corrupt and over-centralised dictatorship. Its victims felt powerless before a state-controlled press, a powerful secret police and a seemingly united, exclusive party elite. Trotsky and his supporters

bequeathed another view of the Soviet system to history, that of the dictatorship of a new bureaucratic ruling class. Writing in 1928, Rakovskii described the means by which this 'unremovable and inviolate oligarchy' had come to power as 'demoralising methods, which convert thinking Communists into machines, destroying will, character and human dignity'.<sup>74</sup> But however the new elite was described, as bureaucracy – 'a greedy, mendacious and cynical caste of rulers';<sup>75</sup> or band of criminals – 'careerists, flatterers and sycophants',<sup>76</sup> the assumption that it was monolithic and backed up by terror was common to both interpretations.

There is nothing to be gained from minimising these accounts. Stalinism involved repression, with opposition ever more broadly defined. But this was not a situation which Stalin alone, or even the Stalinist party elite, had engineered. The Moscow party activists' role in propelling the Stalinist elite to power and in shaping the changes which followed has already been discussed. Just as the dynamic between the elite and sections of the city's population had added impetus to the 'great turn' of 1928–9, so the social and economic pressures of the first Five Year Plan helped to aggravate the repressive aspects of the Stalinist system. For a portion of the working class, principally drawn from the party *aktiv*, the first Five Year Plan saw expanding opportunities. Not only was socialism visibly being built at last, but for many the 'cultural revolution' spelled promotion, either through involvement in the party itself or through training. Thousands of rank and filers left their factory benches in the first Five Year Plan period to train as engineers, take over collective farms, enter the state apparatus. This group, however, was increasingly drawing away from the 'new' workers who flooded the city after 1929, peasant workers, many of them refugees from collectivisation, people with few skills and no interest in supporting the regime. Even the rapid expansion of party membership could not incorporate more than a fraction of these people. The rest remained outside the political system and largely indifferent or hostile to it. Even established workers were questioning official economic policies by 1929. From the summer of 1929, the correspondence of goals between the political elite and the most 'advanced' sections of the working class, so productive in 1928, began to fade.<sup>77</sup> Wages fell, food supplies became more erratic, even in Moscow, and the housing crisis became acute. Moscow's political leadership could not ignore the problem. The Stalinist elite was not secure, and a severe political crisis, if not the regime's collapse, was widely predicted in 1932.

Repression and official secrecy were in large measure responses to

this insecurity. The regime grew more isolated from the mass, including the party mass, and had increasingly to resort to command methods in an attempt to control the economic and social chaos of the last two years of the Plan. But if Moscow's party leadership became more disciplined, in the sense that internal disagreements no longer spilled over into the public forum, its official unanimity was no more than a mask. The capital's leaders were in an exposed position. Although obliged to make rapid economic progress, they were constrained not to commit 'excesses'. The Bauman affair illustrated the dangers of trying to interpret the Politburo's vague, conflicting directives. And Moscow politicians lacked the resources necessary for all-round success; priorities had to be identified in the face of unending pressure from above and from local interest groups such as plant directors and trust heads. While choices were being made at the local level, there was always the risk that the central leadership would opt for a different set of priorities, overturning the MK's work and exposing its responsible officials to criticism or removal. However 'loyal' the hand-picked Moscow leadership became, however carefully real or imagined 'oppositions' were removed, the structural tensions between the Moscow party and the Politburo, and between the Moscow elite and the city as a whole, made government in the capital a precarious task.

**Part II**  
**The Moscow Party**  
**Organisation, 1925–32**

## 5 Party Structure and Organisation

By 1925 there was more agreement about the party's role, and the way in which it should be organised to fulfil it, than there had been in the early post-revolutionary years.<sup>1</sup> In the immediate post-revolutionary period the evolution of a permanent bureaucracy had been a controversial issue, but by 1921 the various departments had taken shape within a structure whose essentials did not alter much in subsequent years. Aside from the bureaucracy – the 'apparatus' – the rest of the party's membership was organised hierarchically on a territorial basis. This principle also endured, despite experiments with 'functional' organisation in the early 1930s. But the demands on the party changed in the 1920s. The two most notable developments were a massive expansion in the party's membership and an increasing involvement in the economy. Party organisation did not evolve in response to a plan, but organisational matters were regarded as one of the keys to overall success, especially after 1929. By the end of NEP, the idea of the 'mass' party had taken hold, a party with cells in every workplace and within factories in every shift, a party capable of guiding the industrialisation effort at all levels. The party apparatus was reorganised to give priority to economic questions, adding 'sectors' responsible for industry and agriculture to the established departments. In the factories, the party's ranks expanded rapidly, and with the expansion came structural changes aimed at mobilising the new recruits. It was not until the end of the first Five Year Plan that the costs of these changes were counted and many of them reversed.

Among the issues settled, at least in theory, by 1925, was the structuring of the party along 'democratic centralist' lines. As the organisation evolved after 1921, the emphasis shifted in practice from 'democracy' to 'centralism', but on paper, at least initially, the formal procedures allowed a degree of autonomy for local organisations. The 1922 party rules defined democratic centralism as

1. The election of all leading party organs from the highest to the lowest ranks;
2. Periodic reports by party organs before the party organisation;
3. Strict party discipline and the subordination of the minority to the majority;

4. Unconditional adherence by the lower ranks and all party members to the decisions of the higher party organs.<sup>2</sup>

The lower ranks referred to in clause 4 were also organised according to the 'democratic centralist' principle. As the rules put it, 'the organisation serving a given district is considered to be higher than all the organisations serving parts of that district'.<sup>3</sup> In 1922 an additional clause stipulated that 'all party organs should be autonomous in the resolution of local questions'. It was a sign of the party's increasing centralism that this clause was dropped when the rules were revised in 1934.<sup>4</sup> And generally in the 1920s the carefully-drafted rules were overlooked as the party struggled to keep control of its own ranks. 'Election' of delegates, the first clause, was seldom effected, the general procedure being appointment from above (ratified by a vote) or nomination from within a small caucus at the local level.<sup>5</sup> Subordination of the lower ranks to the higher was more often observed, but in practice it was not a simple matter. Occasionally it was not obvious which was the 'higher' organ, for example when a *raikom* secretary challenged the judgement of a Communist plant director answerable directly to a Commissar like Ordzhonikidze<sup>6</sup>. More often, the ruling of a 'higher' organ could not be sought. During the chaotic years of the first Five Year Plan, bodies like the MK and the Central Committee were able to intervene only sporadically at the local level, usually to resolve disputes. Central directives, as Bauman discovered, were not always specific enough to guide local leaders. They were useful weapons to invoke when local bodies appeared to be acting without official sanction, but otherwise many of the textbook definitions of party organisation were little more than statements of long-term intent.

## MOSCOW AND THE CENTRE

The Central Committee (or its more powerful organs, the Politburo and Secretariat) exercised both a formal, constitutional, control over the MK and an informal one based on personal links. Mobility between the central apparatus and the MK was frequent, and the national and Moscow elites shared many of the same privileges, often occupying the same apartment buildings. Broadly the Central Committee was responsible for formulating policy and for checking on the fulfilment of directives, in which function it was helped by the Central Control Commission.<sup>7</sup> Central Committee meetings were almost always followed by meetings of the MK addressed by Central Committee

members. These would be followed by local meetings down to the factory shift level.

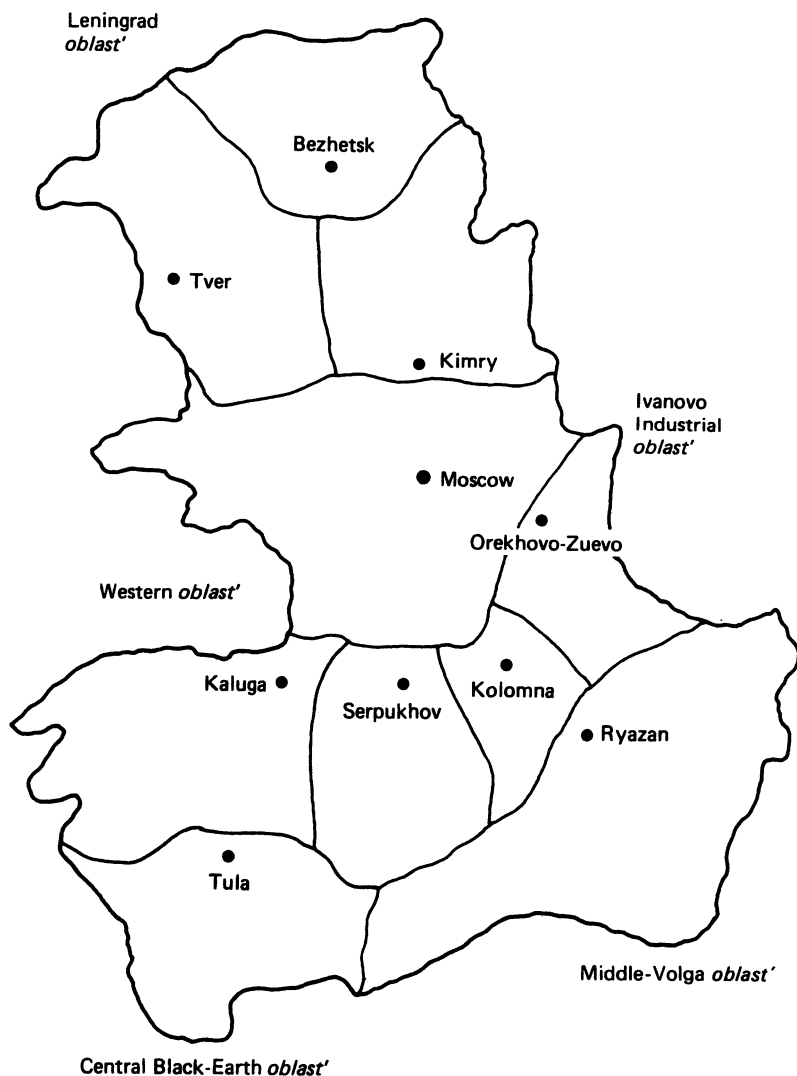
Central Committee decisions were seldom questioned (formally this was forbidden anyway); discussion was designed to publicise the latest resolutions and to find ways of implementing them in local conditions. But even this local autonomy was circumscribed by the centre's special interest in the capital. Implementation in Moscow was often scrutinised at the highest level. In spite of 'democratic centralism', it was the Central Committee's cadres department which appointed the MK secretary and his deputies. The same department also took a hand in the selection of the local party secretaries in the six *raions*.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, central resolutions relating to Moscow's internal affairs were frequent. These covered its economic and political work,<sup>9</sup> the work of the Moscow Control Commission (MKK),<sup>10</sup> and the 'Right deviation' in Moscow.<sup>11</sup> A number of reports to the Central Committee were also commissioned on individual *raikoms*,<sup>12</sup> and even on specific Moscow factories, such as AMO and Serp i Molot.<sup>13</sup> The high level of central interest in Moscow politics helps to explain why the capital's leadership changed so often before 1930. No kind of deviation could be tolerated for long in the country's model party organisation, and it took no time at all for the centre to hear of local dissent. 'It would be funny', Bauman told the seventeenth Moscow Party Conference in 1929, 'if deviations could flourish right under the nose of the Central Committee.'<sup>14</sup>

The lines of communication between Moscow and the centre operated in both directions, however.<sup>15</sup> The proximity of the two organisations often worked to Moscow's advantage. Moscow party members, even at fairly low levels, had unequalled access to influential politicians. Politburo members gave occasional reports on recent developments to party organisations throughout the USSR. In Moscow, however, they were known to appear at *raion* meetings, and some major factories were regularly visited by 'their' Politburo member, who would tour the various shops and also attend meetings of the factory party organisation.<sup>16</sup> Moscow's position guaranteed its privileged access to resources, and its politicians could always secure a hearing for their problems at the highest level.

## THE MOSCOW COMMITTEE (MK)

The party's administrative units corresponded to those of the state. The highest party organ in Moscow was therefore the MK, the Moscow

*guberniya* committee of the Communist Party. In 1929, when the *guberniya* was reorganised and renamed the Moscow *oblast'*, the MK, reorganised and rechristened the Moscow *Oblast'* Committee (*obkom*) took over political responsibility for the expanded territory. The new *oblast'* absorbed the former provinces of Ryazan', Tula, Tver', and part of the old Kaluga province (see Map 5.1). If the old *guberniya* had been



Map 5.1 The Moscow *oblast'* in 1930



large and diverse, the new unit was much more so. Accounting for thirty per cent of the USSR's industrial output, it also included flax-growing regions, textile centres and a substantial market gardening and dairying hinterland.<sup>17</sup> It was partly because of the economic mismatch between the city and its province that the two were separated in 1931.<sup>18</sup>

The decision to re-separate the city was taken suddenly. Unlike many other administrative changes, it was not foreshadowed in the party rules or in any of the outline plans for the development of the *oblast'* before 1931. The background to the change was the continuing problem of poor conditions in the capital, including the housing shortage, poor health care and inadequate public transport. These and similar issues were the subject of an MK plenum in February 1931, which met at the same time as the second Moscow *oblast'* Congress of Soviets. A report in *Rabochaya Moskva* told how the Soviet Congress had 'developed severe, truly Bolshevik criticism of the Moscow Soviet and *oblispolkom*,'<sup>19</sup> who 'until now have not turned themselves sufficiently "face to production" and have not developed sufficiently concrete leadership of the local Soviets'.<sup>20</sup> The day after this report appeared, a meeting of party members, the so-called 'Communist fraction', of the Soviet was called by the MK, followed an hour later by a meeting of the Soviet as a whole.<sup>21</sup> The separation was an MK initiative, and the Soviet had no choice but to approve the party's decision. The new arrangements were announced on 25 February, at the same time as it was announced that Ukhanov, the Chairman of the Soviet since 1926, was to be replaced by N. A. Bulganin.<sup>22</sup>

The creation of a new Moscow city Soviet was followed by an extraordinary joint plenum of the MK and MKK at which a new body, the Moscow *gorkom*, or city committee of the party, was elected.<sup>23</sup> At its first conference, held that day, the new body had 86 members and was headed by the *obkom* first secretary, Kaganovich, and his deputy, Ryndin. For practical purposes, however, the two senior members had too many other commitments, and the real head of the city organisation was its own secretary, at first Gikalo, and then after 1932 Khrushchev. In the course of his daily work, the MGK secretary spent more time with the head of the Moscow Soviet than had been the case before, since the *gorkom*'s main task, the running of political life in Moscow, included the supervision of the Soviet. This closer relationship, in which the party remained the dominant partner, was reflected in the increased number of Soviet representatives on the MGK, especially in comparison with the *obkom* (see Appendix 3). There also remained some overlap in personnel between the MGK and the provincial committee, and the

two organisations held their conferences together in February 1932 and January 1934.

Both before and after the creation of the *oblast*, the MK was a very large body. It had more than a hundred members, the majority of whom were full-time party officials. They included representatives of the Central Committee, the secretaries of the MK, the heads of its various departments, together with their deputies, the secretaries of all the city's *raikoms*, and their heads of department, and also the secretaries of local organisations in the Moscow province. There was a tendency for the proportion of full-time party officials to increase as the years passed, and Central Committee representation on the MK in particular increased markedly. Other MK members included senior trade union officials, representatives of the Moscow Soviet, heads of Moscow economic trusts,<sup>24</sup> representatives of the military district, the educational establishments in the capital and the Komsomol, and the editors of the main local newspaper and of *Pravda*. A large number of the rest were local delegates, elected for a single term. These included the secretaries of local cells, either in factories or transport depots, or in government institutions, and also workers 'from the bench'. Not all factories and institutions could be represented, although important plants like Trekhgornaya Manufaktura, Serp i Molot and AMO always sent delegates. The others were represented occasionally, on a rotation basis. These local representatives did not appear on the lists of committees of the MK which were also elected at the conference, and their influence was minimal except where they represented priority areas, such as the automobile or defence industries.<sup>25</sup>

Conferences of the Moscow Party organisation were held at irregular intervals.<sup>26</sup> Their purpose was more the propagation of information than the open discussion of issues. Conferences would begin with a brief speech by the party secretary and the playing of the *Internationale*. Throughout the proceedings, which could last for up to a week, a carnival atmosphere was fostered, familiar to anyone who has witnessed recent party conferences. Letters of fraternal greeting were read, and delegations received from other parts of the Soviet Union. In contrast with the festive spirit, however, the formal business of the conference could be very demanding, with speeches lasting up to four hours and formal discussions which each occupied several sessions.

The conference's first job was to appoint a presidium, consisting of the most eminent politicians present, which would occupy the stage for its duration. After 1927 the practice was introduced of also appointing an 'honorary presidium', made up of the senior figures in the Politburo,

whose spiritual presence was thus also invoked to watch over the proceedings. The conference would also appoint a secretariat to draft a report of its work, and a commission to draw up resolutions. The members of these bodies were not politicians of the first rank, and it may thus be inferred that their job was a genuine one, requiring time and thought at the time of the conference, even if the resolutions and reports had then to be checked and approved by their superiors.

The reports would typically open with a speech from a prominent Central Committee member. He would begin with a statement of the USSR's international position and then outline developments in national politics since the last conference. This report, which was an important vehicle for the communication of central policy (at least as the speaker himself understood it), generally occupied the first evening session, and was followed by a discussion the next day which could occupy as many as four sessions, or two days. The same pattern would then be repeated with reports from the Central Control Commission, the MK, usually given by the first secretary, and the MKK. The business closed with the submission and approval of resolutions on the main reports, the purpose of which was to affirm the organisation's approval for past policy as presented by the Central Committee and MK, and to state its intentions for the future. Although technically responsible for deciding the outlines of policy, plenary sessions of the conference were not where business was done. The standard of debate declined in this period, and after 1928 genuine disagreements disappeared from the stenographic reports. Moreover, if changes in policy were felt to be necessary between conferences, the MK would not feel irretrievably tied to its conference commitments.<sup>27</sup>

Conferences were immediately followed by a plenum at which the secretaries and the MK buro were formally elected,<sup>28</sup> together with the editor of *Rabochaya Moskva*, the MK newspaper. Plenums, the only other occasion on which the whole MK could meet as a body, were held five or six times a year, numbered from the last provincial conference. Their agendas usually included three or four main items, though plenums could discuss a single topic, as in the case of the October joint plenum of the MK and MKK in 1928. Regular, as opposed to 'extraordinary', plenums, met according to a prescribed plan, drawn up every six months (see Appendix 2). These plans provided the topics for discussion, and also stipulated which non-party experts were to be consulted, including heads of trusts, experts in specific areas such as transport or housing, and trade union officials. The topics discussed ranged from internal party matters to planning and such detailed

economic questions as the internal organisation of the textile industry. Depending on the volume of business, a plenum could last up to three days, running to 3 three- or four-hour sessions a day.

Like the MK, the plenum altered during this period, with working-class representatives virtually disappearing from the attendance lists. The plenum became little more than an expanded meeting of the MK buro. And the more exclusive plenums became, the less coverage they received in the party press. Well before this stage, however, power in the capital had rested with the MK buro and secretariat. The most important figure in Moscow politics was the first secretary of the MK. Appointed by the Central Committee, he was a politician of national standing. Uglanov was a candidate member of the Politburo, as was his successor but one, Karl Bauman. Both Kaganovich and Molotov, who succeeded Uglanov for four months in 1928–9, were Politburo members and close associates of Stalin. All had experience of senior office in another province before taking over in the capital. A politician of this calibre naturally had considerable influence in local politics, including extensive powers of patronage. Uglanov, for example, was able to promote both Pen'kov and Mandel'shtam, who closely shared his political outlook, from minor posts in the *guberniya* to senior positions involving membership of the MK buro. But the Central Committee retained a share in the selection of senior MK officials, including the other MK secretaries and the heads of departments. Subordinates with different views from the first secretary (such as Bauman under Uglanov) could be posted to Moscow in a 'divide and rule' policy which ensured that the organisation would never align itself solidly against the central leadership.

The number of subordinate secretaries on the MK varied (see Appendix 1). Although they were not publicly allocated spheres of responsibility, it was understood that each would cover a specific area of party work. In general the second secretary seems to have been responsible for internal party matters, while the third secretary took charge of economic questions, although this was not a hard and fast rule.<sup>29</sup> In 1927 the secretariat consisted of the first and second secretaries and three others, the head of the powerful organisation department of the MK secretariat, the chairman of the *guberniya* council of trade unions (MGSPS) and the head of the agitation and propaganda department.<sup>30</sup>

The composition of the MK buro did not vary much, despite other changes in party structure. It always included the first and second secretaries, and also the third secretary, if there was one. The secretaries

of the *raikoms* were also included, some of them as candidate (non-voting) members. The heads of the most important departments (*otdely*) of the MK secretariat, such as the *agitpropotdel* and *orgraspredotdel* were also included. The pattern of promotions may provide a clue to the relative importance of these posts. Overall, the MK was more prestigious than comparable local party organisations. Most senior MK officials had previously been secretaries in other provinces. To move to Moscow, even to a subordinate post, was considered a promotion. Notable also was the mobility between the central and Moscow party apparatuses. Many MK officials moved to Central Committee posts, either to head departments or to act as party instructors. It is also clear that the buro had its own hierarchy, in which the head of the *orgraspredotdel* was subordinate only to the first and second secretaries. Until 1927 the head of the women's department was not a member of the MK buro. Even thereafter, she was only a candidate member, a reflection of the lack of importance attached to this aspect of party work. The remaining posts on the MK buro were occupied by the chairman of Mossoviet, the Moscow Economic Council (MSNKh) and the Moscow Provincial Council of Trade Unions (MGSPS), representatives of the military district and of the local OGPU, the secretary of the local Komsomol and the heads of one or two key trade unions and economic trusts. Usually one or two places were reserved for the secretaries of the most important local party organisations from the province (*ukoms*), although at the time of the reorganisation of the province, when many new areas were being absorbed, the number of local secretaries from outside Moscow increased to a maximum of ten.<sup>31</sup> The buro did more than ratify central party directives. It was a forum for genuine discussions about policy in which party officials had to take account of the views of administrators from other bodies.<sup>32</sup>

The buro and secretariat were responsible for the MK's day-to-day work, but like the plenums, they worked to a plan which was elaborated every six months and submitted to the plenum for approval. These plans were lengthy documents, meticulously presenting the work to be done on prescribed dates. The plan adopted at the second MK plenum in 1929, for example, was five pages long, and listed eight separate headings for the buro's work – industry and construction, the reorganisation of agriculture, trade and co-operatives, the material condition of the working class, the structure of the Soviets, cultural and mass work, the Red Army and party work (see Appendix 2). In practice these ambitious plans were often unfulfilled, as the MK buro also had to respond to

less predictable crises, including changes in policy outlined from the centre and the removal of its own personnel as a result of political struggles.

The routine work of the MK was carried out by a number of departments (*otdely*) responsible to the secretariat and, at least theoretically, to the whole committee. The arrangement of these departments was a matter of supreme complexity (see Figure 5.1). They followed the Central Committee's model. Until 1930 the MK had five main departments, to which were attached sub-departments for matters like the press and information. These were the *orgraspredotdel*, which was responsible for questions of organisation and for the selection and assignment of cadres to posts controlled by the party within the *guberniya*<sup>44</sup>; the *agitpropotdel*, which was responsible for agitation and propaganda and provided briefing materials through its journal *Propagandist*, the so-called secret department, whose head was referred to as the 'assistant' (*pomoshchnik*) of the MK secretary, and whose function was to collect information about the party as a whole for the secretary's use;<sup>34</sup> and the departments for women (*zhenotdel*) and for

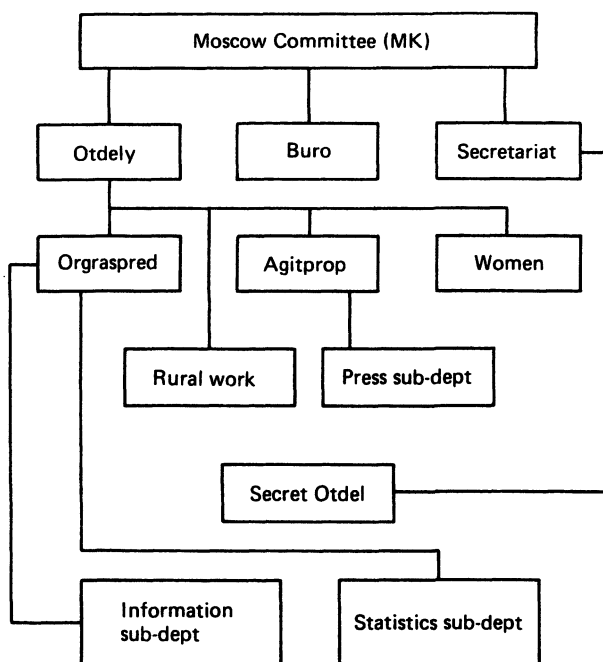


Figure 5.1 The departments of the MK, 1925–29

rural affairs (*otdel po rabote v derevne*), which were very much junior partners, and whose heads did not generally qualify for full membership of the MK buro.

The *otdely* included on their staff a head and deputy, a technical secretary and a number of instructors. The precise number of full-time officials employed in any department is unknown, though general guidelines existed at the time. At the all-Union level the official figures were given as ratios of officials engaged in full-time party work to members outside the apparatus. In 1924 there was one official for every 22 party members, in 1928, one for every 49, and in 1930 one for every 82.<sup>35</sup> These figures reflect the rapid growth in party membership as much as consistent successes in cutting back on the number of full-time officials. Absolute numbers of officials are very difficult to find, and consistent sets of statistics have not been released.

Not all the departments' work was done by full-time officials, however. Part-timers were increasingly used as pressure on resources forced department heads to cut back on staff. Instructors, for example, could work on a full- or part-time basis.<sup>36</sup> Their work included helping cells to implement the directives which came down from the higher committees, and checking and reporting on fulfilment. Full-time instructors were usually attached to a department. Others, who might have a specific skill, would be at the disposal of the *obkom* as needed.<sup>37</sup> Their duties were redefined at various times during the period, usually to include yet more tasks, since as messengers to the lower cells, they were indispensable. Whenever communications between the various levels came under strain, therefore, and when the other party committee staff felt beleaguered with work, the instructors were invoked as the vital link in the hierarchical system. Under these conditions, they could not hope to fulfill all the tasks expected of them, and complaints were frequently made, usually about their unfamiliarity with the lower ranks for which they were responsible.<sup>38</sup> Pressure built up in many official circles for a fully-professional apparatus.

In January 1930 the organisation of the Central Committee apparatus was altered in response to the pressures on the two largest departments, the *orgraspred* and *agitprop otdely*. At an Orgburo meeting, Kaganovich outlined the changes, which were soon to be mirrored in the local organisations. The *orgraspredotdel* was to be divided into two departments, the *otdel raspredeleniya*, responsible for the selection and appointment of administrators for the state and the economy, for trade union leaders and many other non-party *nomenklatura* posts, and the organisation-instruction *otdel*, with responsibility for organisational

work within the party, including party appointments, and for checking on the fulfilment of directives. The *agitpropotdel* was also divided, the new departments being responsible for *agit-mass*, or agitational work among the population as a whole, on the one hand, and for 'culture and propaganda', political education work among party members, on the other. At the same time the rural and women's departments were abolished, a sector for women's work being established under the leadership of the organisation–instruction department.<sup>39</sup> These changes were carried out in Moscow in late January (see Figure 5.2).<sup>40</sup>

The reforms did not solve the problems of parallelism and overwork which beset the party apparatus. Far from diminishing, the pressures on it increased. Among the causes was the party's rapid growth.<sup>41</sup> Again an organisational solution was sought. Alongside the *otdely*, more 'sectors' were now established, the new units being the accounting, party construction, cadres, women and information–statistics sectors.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the party had also become responsible for the detailed running of the economy, and the old structures provided no specific organs for this new work. In Moscow, therefore, these 'functional' sectors were supplemented, in the summer of 1930, by 'production–

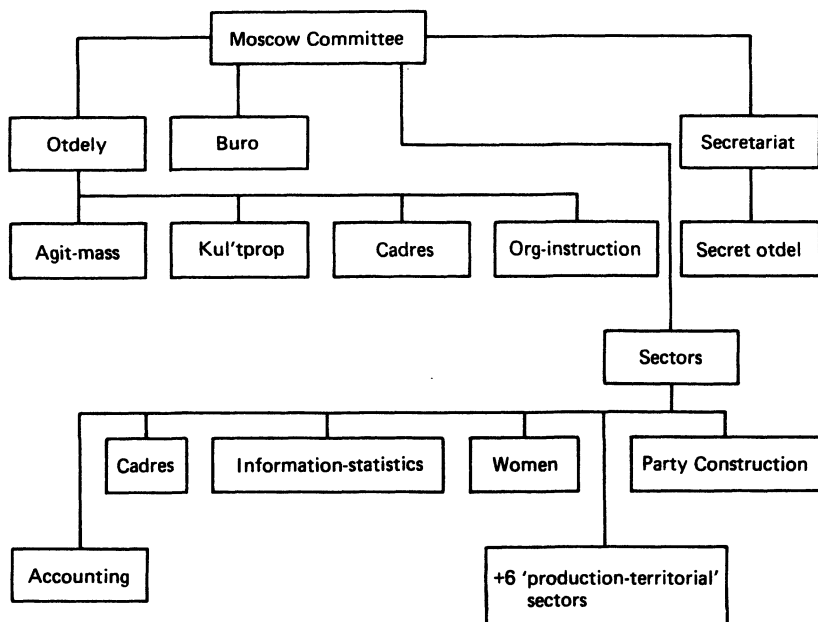


Figure 5.2 MK departments in 1930



territorial' sectors, initially six in number, each responsible for about 30 *raions*, supposedly grouped according to the type of industry which predominated in them.

By 1931 the organisation of party administration had changed again (see Figure 5.3). The information sector had been abolished, and its work had been spread between the others, so that each sector had its own full time information worker. In response to the demands of the economy, however, a further four 'production-territorial' sectors had been added, making a total of ten. Three of these were based on branches of industry – the transport, metal working and war industry sectors – and

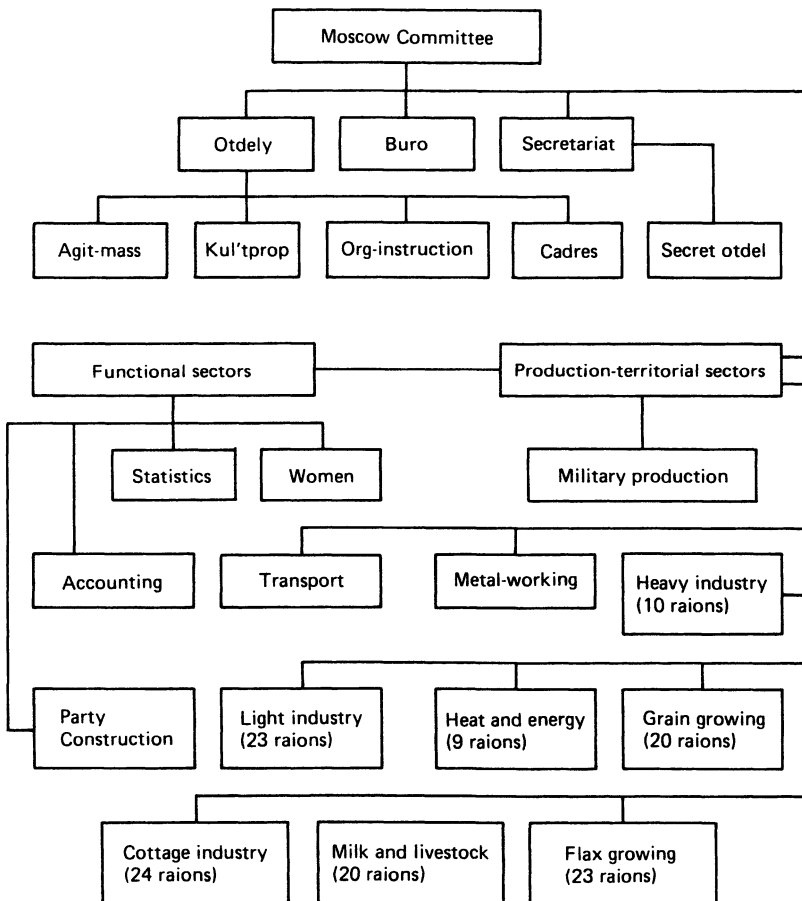


Figure 5.3 MK departments in 1931

took responsibility for all major factories in that industry wherever they were situated. The rest were based on territorial areas within the *oblast*'.<sup>43</sup> At the Moscow party conference of January 1932, the following offices were cited: the *agitmass otdel*, the *kul'tprop otdel*, the *orgotdel*, the cadres *otdel* and the secret *otdel*, and sectors for women, metal-working, transport, energy and heat, and flax growing (see Figure 5.4). By 1936, this structure was again modified, so that overworked staff never had the opportunity of growing accustomed to any of the various systems.

All this was extremely complicated, as even the most ardent contemporary admitted. The system adopted in Moscow was not a national standard, although the Ukraine also tried the territorial-production principle. The idea was experimental, and was the subject of a careful investigation by a representative of the Central Committee's own organisation-instruction department. He considered the principle to be a sound one, but pointed out half a dozen problems with it which

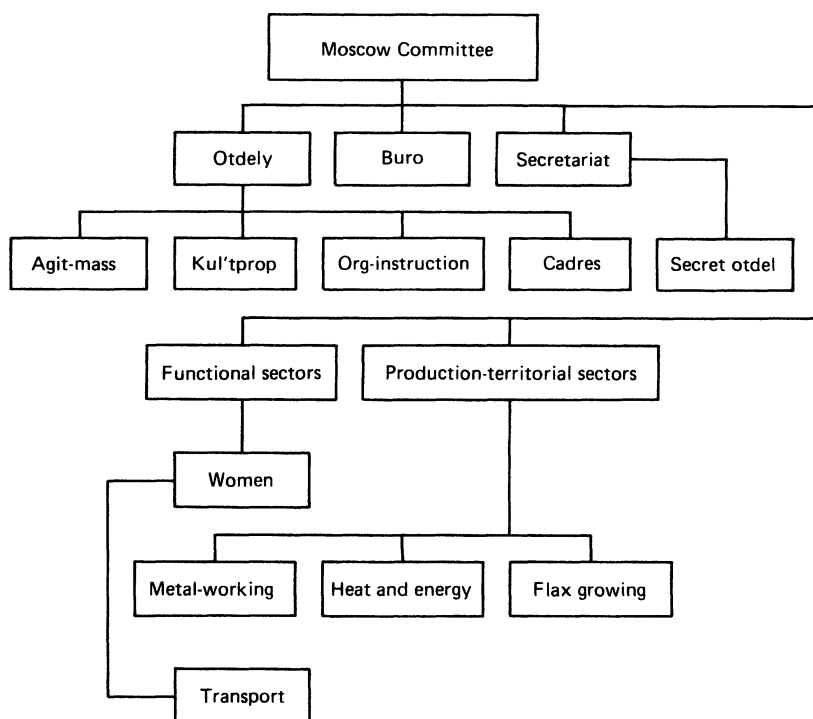


Figure 5.4 Departments mentioned at the III *oblast*' Conference, 1932

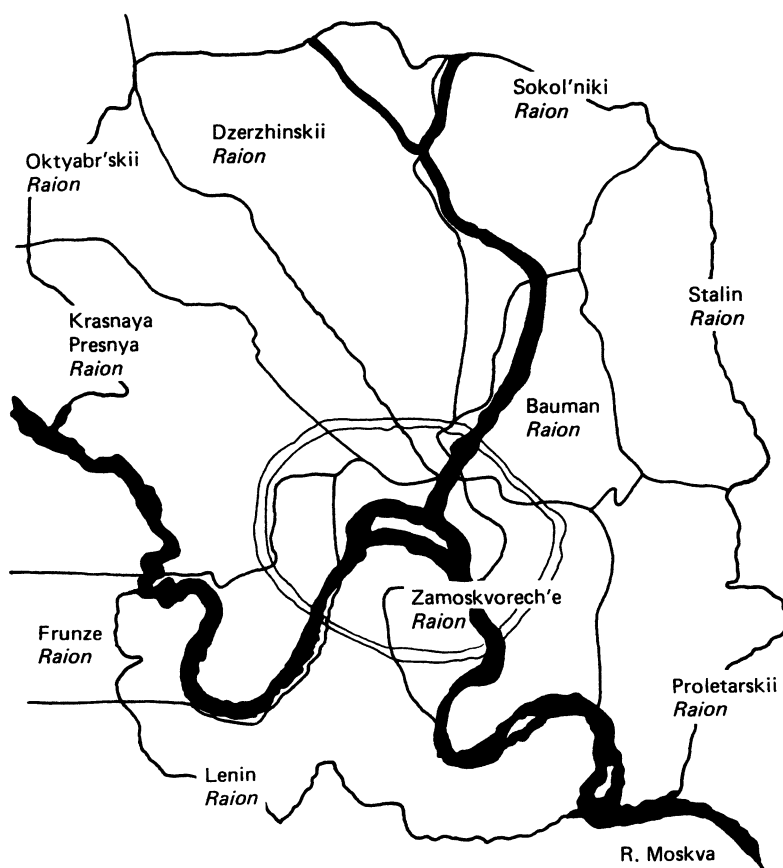
would continue to present difficulties well into the 1930s. The most obvious was the very complexity of the system, which led to poor communications with the *obkom* and disputes over spheres of competence, usually solved either by inactivity or by its opposite, the sector's involvement in every minute detail of local life. Often the sector heads knew only a few of the *raions* for which they were responsible and even telephone links did not exist with some of the remoter ones.<sup>44</sup>

### THE MOSCOW RAIKOMS

From 1922 the city of Moscow was divided into six *raions* (see Map I.1, p. 10). The expansion of industry and immigration of new workers added to the complexity of administering these in the 1920s. In 1928 the largest, Krasnaya Presnya, was investigated by the Central Committee. The shortcomings of its party and soviet organisations were clear, and the solution proposed was an organisational one: the sub-division of the *raion* into two smaller units.<sup>45</sup> By 1930 the irrationality of the old divisions had led to a situation in which the largest *raion* occupied 35 per cent of the area of Moscow, and accounted for 28 per cent of its population, while the smallest, Khamovniki, covered only 7.8 per cent of the city's area, and Proletarskii, the old Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raion*, contained only 11 per cent of the city's population.<sup>46</sup> Discussions about redrawing the map of Moscow began in 1925, but it was not until December 1930 that the city was finally divided into ten new units (see Map 5.2).<sup>47</sup> Even these new divisions were deemed to be inadequate, and by 1936 the whole structure had been altered again.

Internally the *raikom* was like a scaled-down *gubkom*. Its constituted head was a *raion* committee of roughly 75 members, including a proportion, between 30 and 40 per cent, of workers 'from the bench'.<sup>48</sup> The real direction of the *raikom*, however, like that of the MK, came from its buro and secretariat. The *raikom* buro comprised the first secretary and the heads of the *raion otdely*, together with representatives of major interests within the *raion* such as the largest factories, the local Komsomol, the *raisoviet*, any academic or government institutions in the area, the local OGPU and the army.<sup>49</sup>

Until 1920 Moscow's *raikoms* had been unusually autonomous, prompting Myasnikov to refer to the city as a 'federation'.<sup>50</sup> This autonomy had been removed in the restructuring (ostensibly aimed at standardising party work across the country) which accompanied the



Map 5.2 Moscow in 1930

unification of the city and its province in May 1920.<sup>51</sup> But Moscow's *raikoms* continued to act as foci for political debate in the 1920s. Their first secretaries were powerful figures with years of experience behind them and fully-formulated political views of their own. They were also patrons – within the *raion* – in their own right. So although careerist considerations restricted the extent to which they could challenge the MK's line, it was not unknown for *raion* organisations to assume distinctive political hues within the accepted spectrum. And *raions* were still considered legitimate targets for 'capture'. If the Rightist group in Bauman *raion* had succeeded in fielding a slate of candidates for the MK elections in 1930, for example, their votes would at least

have caused the Moscow leadership considerable embarrassment (see Ch 4, pp. 82–3).

The *raikoms*' responsibilities also gave them considerable local influence. They were responsible for recruitment, agitation and the correct organisation of party work throughout the *raion*. They were also ultimately responsible to the MK for local economic development, for the provision of facilities like transport and housing (although these were technically the responsibility of the *raisoviet*), and for such campaigns as *shefstvo*<sup>52</sup> in the countryside. One of their main problems was an acute lack of resources. Responsibility for administrative details, and for failures of any kind, was passed down from the MK to the *raikoms* and their staff. *Raikom* secretaries were expected to know every local party committee, a difficult duty to fulfill in view of the rapid turnover of personnel in the factories, and also the management of the plants and the heads of department of institutions within their boundaries. Failure was inevitable.<sup>53</sup> Despite their seniority, *raikom* secretaries and their heads of department spent a lot of time balancing between the impossible demands of their superiors and the conflicting pressures involved in administering their districts.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORKPLACE PARTY NETWORK

The *raikoms* were too large to serve as effective local party organisations. The party's primary units were based where people worked, in offices, factories or transport depots. These primary party organisations were the full-time officials' main link with the mass of the population. Any doubts the leadership had about its ability to mobilise or communicate with the rank and file raised questions about the structure of these primary cells. They were reorganised several times between 1925 and 1932, and the centre's attitude towards them underwent two major revisions. Relatively few in the mid-1920s, they proliferated during the first Five Year Plan as the party sought to reach every shop in every factory. But the 'mass' experiment created complex communication and discipline problems, exacerbated by the deepening economic crisis after 1930. By 1931 questions were being raised about the competence of the smallest cells, and in 1932 the lowest levels were amalgamated to produce a streamlined, more centralised structure.

In the mid-1920s the number of rank and file party members was relatively small. Because a minimum number of members was needed,

cells could be organised only if they served whole factories, or even groups of factories.<sup>54</sup> Depending on the size of the cell, its committee would either be chaired by a full-time official or by a part-timer who was allowed a fixed amount of leave from ordinary work to carry out administrative duties. This person, the cell secretary, co-ordinated the work of the committee and its buro, which included party recruitment in the workplace, agitation and propaganda. At the twice-yearly elections to the cell buros in Moscow, just over half of the members would be replaced. Even in the factories, many were not workers. A survey of 1928 found that under 40 per cent of the members of cell buros in Moscow were workers 'by current occupation', as opposed to 'social origin'.<sup>55</sup>

The increased enrolment during the 'Lenin levy' of 1924–5 brought pressure for the creation of smaller units, and in 1924 the first 'shop cells' (*tsekhyacheiki*) appeared in the larger factories.<sup>56</sup> Like the more privileged all-factory cells, they were supposed to meet not less than twice a month, or when one third of the members requested a meeting.<sup>57</sup> In theory they took over responsibility for such matters as recruitment and increasing the activism of party members. But their officers were allowed less time to do this work. Shop cells were headed by a buro of three to five full members. These officers were elected every six months, and technically were supposed to elect from their own ranks the secretary, a full party member of not less than one year's standing (*stazh*).<sup>58</sup> Like the rest of the buro, the secretary was not excused from his or her usual work 'unless the *raikom* decides that he or she has an especially heavy burden'.<sup>59</sup> The idea of shop cells did not take hold immediately, and some party committees resented the complications it involved,<sup>60</sup> but by 1928 the number of cells in the city had doubled, largely as a result of the widespread adoption of the new unit.<sup>61</sup> In January 1929, in an effort to spread the load caused by an expanding party membership, the Central Committee finally gave shop cells in factories with more than 5000 workers and 1000 Communists the full statutory rights of cells.<sup>62</sup>

From 1927 until 1931 party work in the factories was dominated by the drive to recruit workers 'from the bench' and to mobilise the workforce around slogans calling for greater activism and vigilance. When the shift system of work became widespread in 1928, spokesmen who dealt with organisational matters began to advocate the establishment of party cells in the new shifts. The idea was not uncontroversial. The objection was that the upheaval was not justified, and that the existing number of shop cell members would be unable to ensure full

coverage of all workers.<sup>63</sup> This argument had much to commend it. At no time, for example, was the party able to cover night shifts adequately, especially since party members regarded it as a privilege of membership that they could choose the shift in which they worked.<sup>64</sup> In the end, however, shift cells were introduced. It was argued that they were indispensable if the whole workforce were to be reached on an individual basis by party officials, whether for the purposes of economic or political mobilisation or for gauging the mood of the local workforce.<sup>65</sup>

The shift was the smallest unit in which party cells were established. Within shifts, however, party groups were set up, each with a minimum of three full members. They were led by group organisers, *grupporgs*, first introduced on the eve of the thirteenth Moscow Party Conference in 1925. An article in *Izvestiya Moskovskogo Komiteta* defined their tasks. 'The *grupporg*', it explained, 'is the political leader of his or her group – they raise the activism and strengthen the unity of the Communist Party members, inform them of the most important resolutions of the cell, answer for the fulfilment of the shop and factory cells' directives in their group and draw the non-party workers around the party'.<sup>66</sup> In practice the tasks which preoccupied the *grupporgs* tended to be mundane ones like the collection of membership fees and ensuring the transfer of candidates to full party membership.<sup>67</sup> And although they were supposed to be full party members, *grupporgs* were so junior that it was not uncommon for candidate members to be bullied into doing the work.<sup>68</sup> Whether or not they were full party members, they tended to be inexperienced and unsure of their precise responsibilities.<sup>69</sup> Similar difficulties beset the hybrid 'link cell' (*zven'yacheika*), which was established in some sections of shops after 1931.

The winter of 1929–30 saw further discussion of the factory party organisations. Contributions on the subject by local party secretaries appeared in virtually every number of *Partiinoye Stroitel'stvo*. The slogan 'face to production' involved a new emphasis on the factory cell, and soon the shop cell, as opposed to the all-factory committee, was being heralded as the vital link in the factory party structure.<sup>70</sup> In September 1930 a series of meetings was scheduled for the factories 'On the new contents, forms and methods of party work in the enterprises'. Part of the purpose of these was to discuss party organisation. At the time two systems were in operation, one typified by Moscow and the other by Leningrad, and thus presumably rival experiments. In Moscow the structure was three-tier: factory committee, shop cell and lowest organs. In Leningrad a fourth tier, the group of allied shop cells, was added.<sup>71</sup>

Eventually, the three-tier option was generalised, with instructors introduced to cement the links between the layers.<sup>72</sup>

At the same time complicated proposals for the division of tasks between the various organs were discussed in the press. In response to

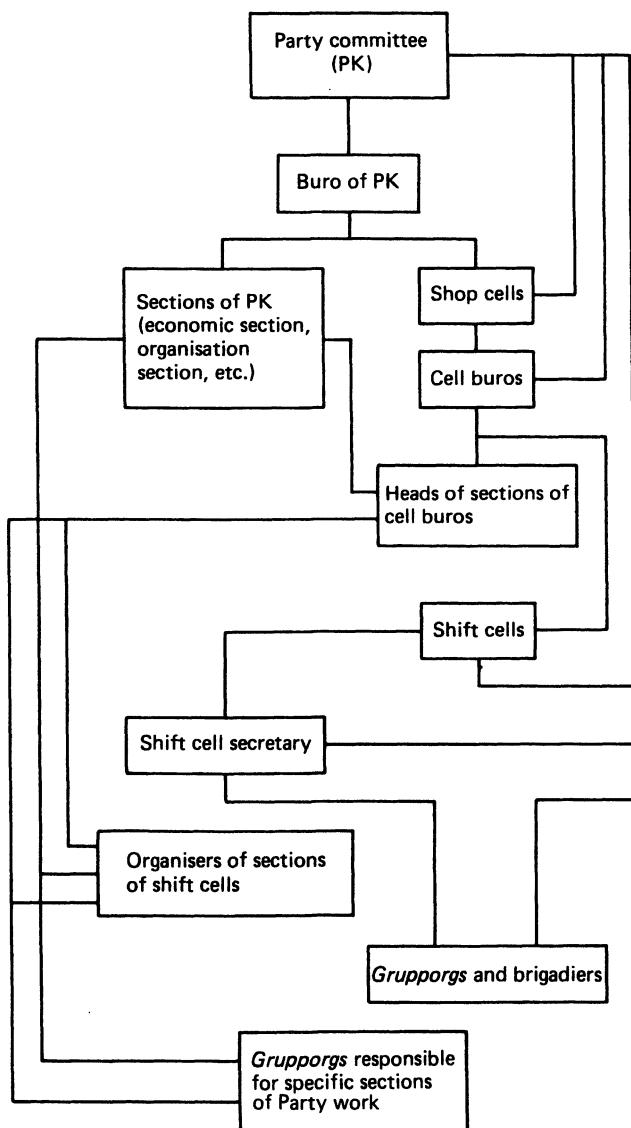


Figure 5.5 The Party organisation in Elektrozavod, 1930  
Source: PS, 1930, no. 3–4.



the establishment of sectors in the *obkom*' factory organisations began to reorganise their work. In *Elektrozavod*, which was regarded as a 'model' factory organisation, 18 sectors were set up; basic ones like production, trade unions, cultural and mass work and information, and more esoteric ones like the national minorities sector and the sector for links with foreign countries. The heads of each of these sectors were responsible to the party committee for their area of work in the factory, although they were not given lighter duties in the factory to make extra time for this. Under their guidance, each of the shop and shift cells would take on responsibility for some of the functions, the larger ones having sectors for all 18, the smaller for only 5 (see Figures 5.5 and 5.6). These sectors were to work to three-month plans, while the sectors

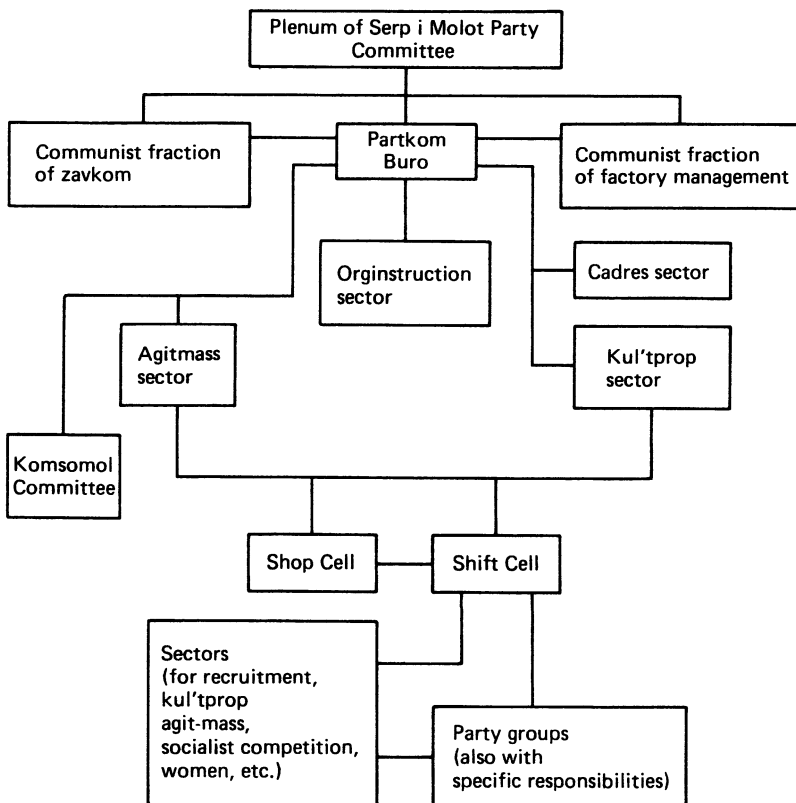


Figure 5.6 Party structure in the Serp i Molot factory in 1931.

Source: Based on the larger diagram in S. Filatov, *Partrabota na Zavode 'Serp i Molot'* (Moscow, 1931) pp. 32–3.

of the factory committee guided them according to a six-month plan.<sup>73</sup>

The sector system, with various modifications, was the norm at all levels of the party organisation in the factory until 1932. In September 1930 an article in *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* advocated reducing the number, mirroring the Central Committee's *otdely*, but it still called for such sectors to be organised, even in the brigades.<sup>74</sup> Note surprisingly, such reorganisation was baffling to the average factory committee, and in 1929, organisational groups were introduced, flying squads from the MK organisation department, with a brief to set up the factory committees along the new lines.<sup>75</sup>

### THE MASS PARTY ABANDONED

The problems with this system were glaring. Even if so much cross-checking and parallelism had been desirable, the party did not have the personnel to run the scheme. Most duties at the lower levels were carried out by unpaid party members, the *aktiv*, full-time workers who had to fit their party responsibilities into their evenings and lunch breaks. The burden on these people was a matter for serious concern. In 1928, before the onslaught of rapid industrialisation, consideration was already being given to the question. *Rabochaya Moskva* observed that there were too many meetings, that they lasted too long, and that party activists took on responsibility for too many tasks. The solution proposed by the newspaper provides an insight into the problem. It suggested that meetings should be kept to a maximum of three hours' duration, with speeches limited to forty minutes each.<sup>76</sup> Despite such suggestions, however, the burden grew heavier. Meetings continued to last well into the night, 'often until three or four in the morning' at Krasnyi Proletarii in 1931.<sup>77</sup> After a night of discussion, party members could hardly be model producers the next morning, still less continue to devote any spare moments to routine party administration. The result was that much party work, including the collection of membership dues, was neglected.<sup>78</sup> Lower cells often ceased to function at all, leaving their tasks to the factory committee, which in practice meant that many problems were not even discussed.<sup>79</sup> The system which had been intended to harness the creative power of the mass ended up earning the party a reputation for incompetence. Moreover, the idea of mass participation was not realised in many factories. However enthusiastic the activists were, and many seem to have had boundless energy, the lower cells were too overworked to fulfil the ambitious plans expected

of them. In some places, moreover, corrupt or inefficient factory committees, threatened by the system of checking, resisted reorganisation and suppressed initiatives from the shop floor.<sup>80</sup>

It was thus no surprise when the system was called into question in 1932. On 14 May that year, Kaganovich made a speech to a plenum of the MGK outlining the need for change. He referred to the party's problem of overstretched resources. The solution he proposed was to reduce the total number of cells and to use mainly 'professional', rather than volunteer cadres.<sup>81</sup> Within a month of this speech, shift cells had been abolished in most factories, and the number of shop cells reduced. At the same time, their size and importance increased. Now they were to be headed by experienced, full-time party workers and to lead the struggle for greater responsibility at work. They were also to forge closer organisational links between the shop floor and the factory party committee.

'Greater responsibility', however, did not simply mean the more efficient running of the local workplace cells. The effect of the changes on the individual party member's ability to make his or her views heard can be judged by changes in the proportion of members to cells. In early 1932, the heyday of shift cells, the number of local cells and groups in Moscow was 15 280<sup>82</sup> while party membership stood at 225 554. By 1935 there were only 3435 primary party organisations in the city,<sup>83</sup> and although party membership had also dropped, to 162 546,<sup>84</sup> the ratio of cells to members was less than a third of the 1932 figure. In view of this change, and of the emphasis placed on 'responsible' and 'experienced' party staff to head the cells, it must be concluded that part of the purpose of the change, like the ending of mass recruitment which closely followed it (see Chapter 6, p. 136), was a desire by the centre to regain control of the party ranks.

The goal of party organisation until 1932 had been to combine centralisation with the desire to harness the enthusiasm, as well as the full productive potential, of the workforce. Increasing emphasis was placed on centralisation at the top, with the powers of conferences decreasing as the buro and secretariat took over the practical running of party life. But the leadership also required popular support, and structural reorganisations were intended to harness this without losing central control. Before the end of the first Five Year Plan, however, the populist element was played down, and the party embarked on a succession of purges and rationalisations intended to bury the 'proletarian' past in favour of a future which was to belong to a small and carefully-screened elite.

On balance, however, it cannot be said that the mass party of these years was simply a failure. At a time when ordinary workers frequently complained about the division between ‘them’, the *verkhi*, or higher party officials, and ‘us’, the *nizy* at the bottom of the social pyramid, the extension of the party network into every shift was a logical aim. And it was essential to incorporate as many workers as possible into the political system if industrialisation were to succeed. On the other hand the mass party created problems for the leadership. These were of two kinds. Incompetence and corruption, inevitable in a large and mainly voluntary organisation, gave the party a bad name. But there were other aspects of the mass party which received less coverage in the press. Local cells sometimes displayed too much initiative and liveliness, occasionally using their status to lobby on behalf of their non-party fellows against official policy. It was not unknown, for example, for party cells to help with the organisation of strikes in the 1920s,<sup>85</sup> and in 1930 a group of Komsomols in Serp i Molot acted as the nucleus for a movement protesting against the introduction of night shifts.<sup>86</sup> The party press preferred to stress problems which reflected on individuals, such as corruption or overwork, but the mass party also had a less discussable side, which was that politically active and thoughtful members of the proletariat did not always support every aspect of official policy. Activists might in good faith challenge their masters, believing their task to include the representation of local views. Alternatively they could deliberately engage in opposition, especially where local economic issues were involved. Various euphemisms were used by a leadership anxious to play this down. Often workers were accused of ‘misunderstanding’ policy, a term which cropped up frequently in accounts of the problems of mass agitational work (see chapter 7). When the time came to reform party structure, the difficulties of communication in the mass party were stressed, together with the problems of ‘overwork’ for voluntary activists. These official reasons gave part of the truth, but it should not be forgotten that the reforms of 1932 also reflected the centre’s desire for tighter control.

## 6 Party Membership and Recruitment in Moscow

The period 1924–32 was one of rapid expansion for the Communist Party. The need for mass recruitment was repeatedly stressed, and intake figures were treated as a measure of the party's vigour. As Kaganovich put it in 1930, 'the growth of the party, both quantitatively and qualitatively – the growth of its ideological and political level – is one of the clearest indicators of its viability, its deepest links with the masses and the confidence of these masses in their party.'<sup>1</sup>

Officially recruitment was not a mere matter of numbers. The enrolment of as many workers as possible, especially those still engaged in production ('at the bench' – as opposed to those who now worked in offices) was the campaign's priority. It was axiomatic that the proletariat was the class on which socialism would be based. Marx had described the Communist Party as the politically-conscious wing of the proletariat, although it included members whose origins were intellectual and bourgeois. In 1917 Lenin had added the poor peasants to the revolutionary alliance, but they were junior partners in theory as well as practice. Proletarian membership was essential if the party's claim to be the vanguard of the working class was to be believed. The party also needed to be seen to be popular among the class it sought to represent. High levels of worker recruitment were repeatedly quoted as proof of the correctness of the party's line, especially in answer to the challenge of the Left.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the recruitment of workers had been slow after 1921, and would be halted in 1933. The pace set in the late 1920s and early 1930s would never be resumed. Ideology alone was not responsible for the priority given to worker recruitment in this period. Above all the leadership saw the enrolment of workers in the party as a way of involving them in its policies. In the absence of material incentives, it was thought that support for campaigns like industrialisation could be gained by involving people in party life. As industrialisation gathered pace, the importance of worker recruitment was increasingly stressed. In 1924 the number of Communists, even in urban areas, was small. In many factories the party was not represented at all. Its aims and policies could not be presented effectively, and it was in danger of losing touch with a key section of the population. From 1924 efforts

began to rebuild links with the urban population and to establish a party presence in the villages. The struggle to reach the rural population was never won.<sup>3</sup> But in the cities, where the involvement of workers was crucial during industrialisation, the party succeeded in reaching almost every workplace by 1932.

Recruitment and the party's social composition were thus major issues. But the Moscow party's record on proletarian recruitment was relatively poor. The reasons for this will be discussed below. Ultimately the policy of mass proletarian recruitment was abandoned at the national level. Moscow's experience of the policy confirms that one of the reasons was that 'proletarianisation' stretched the party's resources to the limit. However, the nine years of mass proletarian recruitment left their mark. Lenin's vanguard was superseded by a new generation, in which members who had joined since 1924 predominated, the largest group being those recruited between 1929 and 1931. These changes were to have lasting significance for party life.

#### THE COMPOSITION OF THE MOSCOW PARTY ORGANISATION, 1925–32

The size of the Moscow party, which grew very rapidly, was frequently discussed.<sup>4</sup> Precise figures on its social composition, however, were seldom disclosed. Anomalies in accounting made any figures cited unreliable. Two basic categories were used by Soviet statisticians; 'social origin', which was ostensibly used to distinguish members of the Tsarist bureaucracy from proletarian, mainly Bolshevik, promotees, and 'social situation'. The distinction between the two was confusing even at the time. 'Social origin' described the individual's background, which usually meant his or her parents' occupation. This was clearly different from 'current occupation', a category occasionally used for 'workers at the bench' to reinforce their proletarian credentials, but less distinct from 'social situation', a category which referred to the individual's main trade up to the moment when they joined the party.<sup>5</sup> Politicians did not always choose to explain which of these definitions they were using, muddling the figures to suit their short-term convenience. And the social categories themselves changed. In 1927, for political purposes, the classes 'worker' and 'employee' were expanded at the expense of the 'peasants'.<sup>6</sup> 'Employees' (*sluzhashchie*) was a particularly broad and fluid category, including, at different times, office cleaners and doormen, storekeepers, nurses and some junior technical personnel.

Table 6.1 Membership of the Moscow party organisation, 1924–34 (1 January)

Year	<i>In Moscow</i>			<i>In the Moscow province as a whole</i>		
	<i>Members</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Total</i>
1924	35 244	9 319	44 563	41 537	11 584	53 121
1925	48 246	22 241	70 487	58 018	32 116	90 134
1926	66 225	24 967	70 487	83 915	37 976	121 711
1927	76 542	20 916	97 548	97 925	31 486	129 411
1928	84 225	19 796	104 021	108 732	30 656	139 388
1929	100 077	20 886	120 963	130 045	33 661	163 706
1929 (at 1 July) <sup>1</sup>	105 722	22 306	128 028	168 293	49 461	217 754
1930	112 203	23 685	135 888	175 153	51 180	226 333
1931	126 740	39 372	166 112	197 376	89 486	286 862
1932	162 665	62 889	225 554	255 549	139 555	395 104
1933	190 280	51 938	242 218	302 857	119 322	422 179
1934	138 532	37 737	176 269	217 069	72 099	289 168

Source: *Moskovskaya gorodskaya i Moskovskaya oblastnaya organizatsiya KPSS v tsifrakh*, p. 28.

Note

<sup>1</sup> The expansion since January was mainly the result of the amalgamation of several new provinces into the Moscow *oblast'*.

The picture was also complicated by the frequent failure of statisticians to specify whether they were referring to the city of Moscow or to the province as a whole.

Although it is possible to give approximate figures for social composition, a precise and systematic study cannot therefore be offered. Even at the time this was a difficult matter to assess, as well as a subject heavily influenced by political considerations.<sup>7</sup> Very broadly, what happened was that the proportion of workers in the Moscow party increased slowly and inconsistently over the eight years 1925–32. The growth resulting from the 1924 ‘Lenin enrolment’ was not sustained. A survey of composition ‘by social situation’ found that in July 1925, 70.5 per cent of the Moscow party organisation had started employment as workers, 5.2 per cent as peasants and 23.4 per cent as white-collar workers and students, while in November 1926 the proportions of workers and peasants were 70.6 per cent and 6.1 per cent respectively, employees and students representing 23 per cent of the total.<sup>8</sup>

In the next two years the proportion of workers fell slightly, to 67.7 per cent in July 1927<sup>9</sup> and 66.7 per cent in January 1928.<sup>10</sup> Thereafter, until 1930, the proportion of workers rose steadily, while the percentage of white-collar employees fell. At the end of the period the proportion of workers again dropped, though it remained high. At the *oblast'* and city conference of January 1932, the figures shown in Table 6.2 were quoted.

The concept of 'social situation' was crucially important to the calculations of the Bolsheviks, most of whose leaders prided themselves on their own proletarian roots. After 1930 the names of senior bureaucrats like Ordzhonikidze and Kaganovich began to appear on reports with the initial 'r', for *rabochii*, worker, in brackets after them, although their acquaintance with the realities of workers' lives grew fainter as the years passed.<sup>11</sup> But the need to retain a genuinely proletarian element, the 'workers from the bench', in the party was also perceived, and after 1929 'current occupation' became the more common statistic. Here again, the proportion increased over the whole period, after having declined between 1926 and 1928. It reached its maximum in 1930<sup>12</sup> and fell steadily thereafter, reaching 43.1 per cent in January 1932.<sup>13</sup>

These were the overall figures for the Moscow party, but in many ways they are a misleading guide to its social composition. The growing proportion of 'workers from the bench' demonstrated the progress of official recruitment policies. But it provides no guide to the social composition of the party apparatus, the secretaries who held power in Moscow. In general the proportion of workers fell at each level in the party hierarchy, with the MK itself having the fewest. Thus workers

Table 6.2 Social composition of the Moscow Party, 1931–2

	Workers (%)	Peasants (%)	White-collar workers (%)
<i>In oblast'</i>			
1 January 1931	75.4	9.9	14.7
1 January 1932	74.5	13.2	12.3
<i>In city of Moscow</i>			
1 January 1931	69.8	3.1	27.1
1 January 1932	76.7	6.8	16.5

Source: *III Moskovskaya oblastnaya i II moskovskaya gorodskaya konferentsii VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1932), bulletin no. 3, p. 42.



by social situation predominated among the *aktiv*, although the number of activists still 'at the bench', even in factories, was lower.<sup>14</sup> Factory cell secretaries were more likely to be workers than the members of their buros, who included representatives of the factory administration.<sup>15</sup> Of *raikom* secretaries, only just over half, even in 1931, were workers by social situation,<sup>16</sup> and workers by social situation comprised about 45 per cent of the MK itself in 1930. This figure included bureaucrats who had been full-time party workers since the Revolution.<sup>17</sup> At the level of party conferences, however, where workers were regularly co-opted from the factories for a single session, the proletarian contingent was impressively large, 81.9 per cent at the second Moscow *oblast'* conference in June 1930 and almost as high at the *raion* conferences in the city the same year.<sup>18</sup> What these figures suggest is that however rapid proletarian recruitment may have been at the grass roots level, the promotion of workers into the party apparatus was relatively slow in this period.

The general trend in Moscow was similar to that in other urban areas. But the capital was unable to match the rates of worker recruitment achieved elsewhere. Repeated references to high proportions of workers in the Moscow party concealed the fact that Moscow's record was poorer than that of comparable urban party organisations. On 1 January 1928, the situation was as shown in Table 6.3. Even compared with the national average, which included peasant areas far from the centre, Moscow's record was poor.<sup>19</sup> Between 1928 and 1930 the rate of recruitment in Moscow briefly jumped ahead of the national average, but it fell behind again thereafter for the rest of the period (see Table 6.4).

So the Moscow party had two shortcomings from the recruitment point of view; it was behind other areas in improving its social

*Table 6.3* Social composition of the Moscow, Leningrad and Baku party organisations compared (percentages of workers, peasants and employees by social situation)

	<i>Workers</i>	<i>Peasants</i>	<i>Employees</i>
Moscow	66.7	4.5	28.8
Leningrad	75.3	3.9	20.6
Baku	80.3	6.9	13.6

*Source: Izvestiya TsK, 20 June 1928.*

Table 6.4 Growth of the Moscow Party, 1928–32

	<i>Percentage increase</i>	
	<i>1928/30</i>	<i>1930/32</i>
National CPSU	128.49	185.8
Moscow city	130.6	165.9
Moscow <i>oblast'</i> as a whole	162.4	174.5

The exceptionally high *oblast'* figure for 1928–30 is explained by the territorial expansion of the area in 1929. Figures for Moscow from *Moskovskaya gorodskaya i Moskovskaya oblastnaya organizatsiya KPSS v tsifrah* (Moscow, 1973) p. 28; national figures from Rigby, p. 52.

composition and its overall rate of recruitment was lower than average. For the capital city, the party's showpiece and the home of nearly a fifth of the USSR's proletariat, this was an embarrassing situation. Various explanations were offered. Commentators at the time identified two types of problem; those relating to the 'objective' conditions in the capital, and those arising from the failings of responsible activists, called 'subjective' problems. Both these explanations need to be set in the context of recruitment policy nationally.

## RECRUITMENT POLICY IN THE SOVIET UNION

The fall in the proportion of workers in the Moscow party between 1926 and 1928 reflected a national trend. The target set by the Central Committee throughout the period was that half of the party's membership should be 'workers from the bench'. Between 1925 and 1927, however, Bolshevik leaders were reluctant to engage in campaigns of mass recruitment among workers. The reasons for this were complex, as was the motivation behind renewed enrolment in 1927.

In 1925 the party was in the process of absorbing the first mass wave of recruits since the Civil War, the products of the 'Lenin enrolment' of 1924. Between 1 January 1924 and 1 January 1925, 329 804 new members and candidates had been added to the roll, almost doubling the party's size and bringing it up to its largest membership to date.<sup>20</sup>

While applauding the new influx of 'class-conscious' workers, many commentators were wary of the implications of the change. The dedication and political awareness of some of the new generation were questioned. As an article in *Izvestiya Tsentral'nogo Komiteta* delicately put it, 'when the interests of the working class as a whole are at odds with those of a specific group of workers . . . for example, on the question of wages . . . a proportion of the "Lenin recruits" fall under the influence of the surrounding non-party environment'.<sup>21</sup> Workers who joined the party used their new status to press for improvements in living conditions and work regulations, upsetting stringent policies on production and calling attention to the failure of the revolutionary regime to fulfil its promises to the working class. New recruits were also less resistant to Opposition speeches, as well as to general disagreements with central policy, than the majority group in the Central Committee might have hoped.

Training the new generation also presented problems, and 1925 saw a spate of articles in the press criticising the large proportion of candidate members whose promotion to full membership was overdue. This was often the result of bureaucratic log-jams. Alternatively candidates might have failed to satisfy the requirements for 'political literacy'.<sup>22</sup> Although later recruitment campaigns had more drastic effects on the composition of the party than the first 'Lenin enrolment', this was the first experiment in mass recruitment, and policymakers were inclined to tread carefully.

Concern about the political reliability of the new recruits was not the only reason for the slowing down of proletarian recruitment between 1925 and 1927. The years 1925–6 also saw a modest drive for peasant recruitment.<sup>23</sup> This diverted efforts away from the proletariat and also increased the proportion of peasants in the party. However, the campaign to recruit peasants does not entirely account for the drop in the intake of workers. At the fourteenth Party Congress, Stalin was cautious in his advocacy of the new line,<sup>24</sup> and national figures indicate that the proportion of peasants in the party, though increasing, remained well below that of other social groups.<sup>25</sup>

The struggle with the Left also affected recruitment. Open meetings of the party were often used as forums for recruiting in the factories, but in 1926 and 1927, discussions about the Opposition obliged local organisations to hold up to half their meetings behind closed doors.<sup>26</sup> The party was so preoccupied with the Opposition that little time was available for discussing the recruitment issue.<sup>27</sup> And the bitter struggle with the Left compromised the party in the eyes of many potential recruits. It was not so much that people supported the Left, more that

the grotesque struggles between its leaders discredited the party as a whole. The enthusiasm with which party commentators insisted that the Left caused no reduction in membership suggests that the reverse was the case.<sup>28</sup> Mass proletarian recruitment was frequently to be invoked after 1927 as an indicator of the party's popularity in the face of the Opposition challenge.<sup>29</sup>

For all these reasons the proportion of proletarian members declined between 1925 and the end of 1926. The party census of January 1927 (see Table 6.5) provided the advocates of a renewed enrolment campaign with powerful ammunition, showing that the proportions among candidates presaged a rise in peasant and white-collar membership and a fall in the proportion of workers. 1927 saw a gradual increase in worker recruits, but it was not until October, at the time of the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, that a major recruitment drive was launched. The timing suggests that a further motive for the change was the planned industrialisation drive, for which the co-operation of the proletariat was to be crucial.<sup>30</sup>

The 'October Enrolment' was the first of the succession of recruitment campaigns which characterised the first Five Year Plan period. The need to demonstrate overwhelming mass support and to mobilise industrial workers led to repeated calls for rapid proletarian recruitment. The 'October Enrolment' itself ended in February 1928, by which time the proportion of workers by social situation in the party had risen from 55.7 per cent to 56.8 per cent.<sup>31</sup> The summer of 1928 saw a slackening in worker recruitment, but in November 1928, at the time of the defeat of the Right in Moscow and the beginning of the campaign of rapid industrialisation, the Central Committee specified that 80 per cent of new recruits in the next year were to be drawn directly 'from the bench'. At the same time a target membership of 70 per cent 'workers from the bench' was set for party organisations in industrial areas.<sup>32</sup>

*Table 6.5 Social composition of the all-Union Communist Party by social situation (not counting members in the Red Army or in establishments abroad)*

	<i>All (%)</i>	<i>Workers (%)</i>	<i>Peasants (%)</i>	<i>White-collar (%)</i>	<i>Other (%)</i>
Members	100	63.9	13.5	20.3	2.3
Candidates	100	40.7	28.8	26.9	3.6
Total	100	56.4	18.4	22.4	2.8

*Source:* E. Smitten, *Sostav VKP(b) po materialam partiinoi perepisi 1927 goda* (Moscow, 1927) p. 9.

The steady rise in the number of workers enrolled was temporarily interrupted by the purge of 1929, which was most severe among the latest generation of recruits. However, the evidence that recruitment was proceeding too rapidly for the adequate screening of candidates did not deter the advocates of mass enrolment. High targets continued to be set, and industrial areas were presented with the task of increasing their worker intake to 90 per cent of the total in order to fulfill their quotas. Further campaigns, including a second 'Lenin Enrolment' in the early spring of 1930, kept the subject permanently in the party press. After 1931, however, the question of the 'quality' of recruits, their suitability as potential party members, began to attract attention.<sup>33</sup> From February 1930 onwards, white-collar workers and peasants again began to be admitted to the party in numbers. In August 1932 *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* announced the end of 'campaign recruitment' and called for steadier, planned growth. The following year, proletarian recruitment ceased altogether, not to begin again until 1936. The 50 per cent national target had never been reached.<sup>35</sup>

## RECRUITMENT IN MOSCOW

### (a) 'Objective' problems

As the capital, Moscow had a number of handicaps from the recruitment point of view which partly cancelled the benefits it received from its large proletarian population and experienced party elite. A Central Committee resolution of June 1926 summed up the problem as

A huge state apparatus, numbering hundreds of thousands of employees, among them a significant bureaucratised element and even some remaining from the pre-revolutionary past; the concentration in Moscow, as the chief economic centre in the country, of bourgeois Nepman elements, the difficult living conditions for workers, the large masses of new workers, introduced into the production process for the first time, and also a very significant number of unemployed people.<sup>36</sup>

The consistently high proportion of white-collar workers and students in the Moscow organisation helps explain its relative weakness in terms of worker recruitment and its relatively slower overall growth. Although employees stood to gain more from membership in terms of enhanced career prospects than did workers,<sup>37</sup> before 1931, discriminatory rules,<sup>38</sup>

including a longer candidate stage and the production of references, made it harder for them to join. Unemployment was less of an excuse for Moscow's relatively poor performance. Although the problem in the city was acute in the 1920s, it also affected other industrial centres. All large cities acted as magnets for peasants from the hinterland at this time, and the problem was exacerbated by the job losses associated with the regime of economy. What the Central Committee report did not mention, however, were the problems specific to recruiting among workers in Moscow.

The outstanding feature of Moscow industry in the 1920s was that it was a textile centre.<sup>39</sup> Workers in the textile industry nationally were less likely to join the party than those of most other industries. The reasons generally given were the predominance of women in the workforce<sup>40</sup> and the low skill levels of many of the operations in the industry. However, party membership in the Moscow textile industry was lower than that in other areas.<sup>41</sup> In the metal industries, the situation was no better.<sup>42</sup> Why did Moscow lag behind other industrial areas in the USSR?

No single factor explains the difference between Moscow and areas like Ivanovo and Leningrad. The 'subjective' failings of Moscow's recruiters played a significant part, as will be seen later. However, their task was complicated by some of the features of Moscow industry in these years. In the first place, large-scale industry in Moscow was relatively new; until the turn of the century, the characteristic pattern had been small firms, consisting of a handful of craftsmen, operating in the city itself, with one or two large concerns sited beyond the city limits.<sup>43</sup> Factories built outside the city, such as the giant Kolomenskoe metalworks or the the Ramenskaya fabrika, a textile plant, characteristically drew on labour from nearby settlements. The workers were thus mainly peasants still resident in their villages. The system saved on housing costs for the factory owner, but it hindered the development of a politically conscious proletariat. The problem can be illustrated by looking at party membership at the Ramenskaya fabrika. In 1926 roughly half of its workers still lived in their villages, the others being housed in dormitories attached to the factory. Of the first group, only twelve had joined the party, while 230 of those living on the site had done so. Landholding, with its implications for the workers' political outlook, was not the only explanation, moreover. Since many workers who lived off the site had substantial distances to travel to work, they could claim that they had no time for party responsibilities in the

evenings, and no sense that party discussions in the factory would alter their own lives.<sup>44</sup>

A further reason for the difficulties of recruitment among textile workers in the Moscow region was suggested by a survey conducted in 1929. Textile workers, by this time, tended to be older than metalworkers, and their overall literacy rates were lower. While only 20.3 per cent of metalworkers were over 40, 26.1 per cent of textile workers had reached the age at which it was 'extremely difficult to involve them in active work' and when they could have 'only a weak commitment to political education'. On the question of literacy, textile workers were even further behind those in the metal-working industry (see Table 6.6), and although the high proportion of women was partly responsible, male literacy in the textile industry was also low. As the report noted, overall literacy rates in the Moscow textile industry were lower than in other textile areas.<sup>45</sup>

The issue of workers' 'links with the countryside' was another persistent source of concern to the Moscow leadership.<sup>46</sup> The problem has two aspects; industrial *stazh* – the length of time a worker had spent in industry – and landholding by workers. A survey conducted for the Moscow party journal, *Sputnik Kommunist*, in 1929 found that 44 per cent of a sample of metalworkers and 41 per cent of textile workers had started as peasants. Although about a fifth of these had joined the workforce during the First World War, the number of recent recruits to the workforce was high, and increased over the next two years.<sup>47</sup> Party officials were in no doubt that recent recruits to the workforce were less likely to join the party, or to take part in any 'social' activity at work, than the cadre workers. On the other hand, it was the longer-established workers who tended to hold land. The *Sputnik Kommunist* survey found that 46.3 per cent of metalworkers who had joined the industry before 1905, but only 32.7 per cent of those who had joined since 1928, still held land in 1929. Textile workers were

Table 6.6 Literacy rates among textile and metal workers in Moscow, 1929

	'Illiterate' (%)	Men (%)	Women (%)
Textile workers	21.1	6.5	30.4
Metal workers	3.6	2.2	14.5

Source: SK, 1930, no. 3.

less likely to be landholders, mainly because of the number of women in the industry.<sup>48</sup> However, the existence of direct links between workers and the villages led to problems in all industries in Moscow. ‘The mood of the country prevails’, Mandel’shtam, the head of the Moscow *agitpropotdel*, declared in 1928, ‘and will give rise to reactionary waverings even in the working class, causing nervousness and raising its sensitivity to difficulties’.<sup>49</sup>

All this helps to explain why it was the large enterprises in Moscow which were the most backward in recruiting party members (see Table 6.7). In revolutionary Petrograd the large factories saw the greatest activism among workers, but even there, recent recruits to the workforce were too disorientated to participate in organised political movements.<sup>50</sup> Just as it was the established workers who led the proletarian revolution in Petrograd, so in Moscow, cadre workers predominated in the party. In large factories, such as *Serp i Molot*, a particularly poor recruiter in the 1920s, the workforce had expanded very rapidly since the war, putting a brake on political activism.<sup>51</sup> Larger factories also experienced problems of communication, and it was more difficult for party workers there to make personal contacts with potential recruits.

Moscow also had a substantial floating population of migrant workers (*otkhodniki*), the majority of whom showed no interest in political life. Large numbers of migrant construction workers competed for work in the expanding city during the summer building season. Peat cutters and workers in some branches of the transport industry were also included in the ‘seasonal’ category. In 1926 there were more than 200 000 seasonal workers of all kinds in the city.<sup>52</sup> *Otkhodniki* usually returned to the countryside in the winter, thus renewing their

*Table 6.7 Membership of the Moscow Party by size of factory (1928)*

<i>Number in enterprise</i>	<i>% of communists</i>
up to 30	7.2
30–100	15.8
101–500	13.8
501–1000	12.0
1001–3000	9.5
3001–5000	5.7
5000 upwards	5.9

*Source:* SK, 1928, no. 12.



'reactionary moods', and while in the city were notorious for their hard living, drinking and gambling. Commented N. Rabinovich in *Sputnik Kommunist*, 'party workers find the environment among them extremely unfriendly'.<sup>53</sup>

A different kind of explanation for low worker membership in Moscow is provided by Moscow's status as a provider of cadres for the rest of the country. Although the numbers involved were not large enough to account for the whole shortfall, the problem was significant even in the 1920s. Workers who were promoted into administrative posts might remain in the capital, but large numbers were needed for the provinces, and Communists were the overwhelming majority of these. In 1925 1028 Moscow Communists were mobilised for work in the countryside, 48 per cent of whom were workers 'from the bench'.<sup>54</sup> Collectivisation called for even greater numbers. In 1930 1032 of the most trusted Communists in Moscow left factory jobs for work on the collective farms, while a further 2000 took up posts as farm managers, instructors and mechanics.<sup>55</sup> While Moscow was not unique in providing such cadres, its burden was second only to that of the Ukraine.<sup>56</sup> Even Leningrad finally contributed only a third of the Moscow figure in 1930.<sup>57</sup>

Such were the 'objective' problems of the capital, difficulties which reflected on neither the enthusiasm nor the efficiency of the party recruiters. Critics of Moscow, particularly the Leningrad oppositionists of 1925, however, were apt to stress the latter as the reason for its shortage of proletarian party members.

#### **(b) 'Subjective' problems**

Proletarian recruitment, as we have seen, lagged in Moscow most markedly in the period before 1929. This was not because other groups were given preferential treatment – the brief phase of peasant recruitment in 1924–5, for example, had little impact in the city of Moscow. The main brake on proletarian recruitment from the policy point of view was concern about the political attitudes of new recruits and thus about the discipline problems raised by mass enrolment. Under the Uglanov leadership this concern was emphasized more frequently than usual.<sup>58</sup> Mandel'shtam, a close political ally of Uglanov, declared in 1925 that 'we bowed too early to the democratic pressure after 1923 ... and too often the membership of our cell buros is too young ... We must not lose sight of the need to ensure firm party leadership'.<sup>59</sup> The responsibility of urban areas to recruit more workers than the national average was

not mentioned, the targets in Moscow remaining those of the country as a whole.<sup>60</sup> It was only after the promotion of Bauman that rapid recruitment in Moscow began to receive the emphasis required to reach the Central Committee's targets.

Between the end of 1928 and 1930 recruitment rates in Moscow were among the highest in the country, and by October 1930, 53.8 per cent of the Moscow party's membership were workers 'from the bench'.<sup>61</sup> The impact of the more enthusiastic leadership was thus immediate, although it was not the only influence on recruitment rates. After 1930 problems began to surface, however, and the rate of proletarian recruitment began to fall in the capital as elsewhere. Bauman's dismissal may have played a small part in this, as he had shown himself to be more zealous than the party majority in most spheres, but on its own, it was not an adequate explanation.

Part of the problem of recruiting workers lay with the procedure required for approving a new candidate. It was up to the party, rather than the prospective member, to make the first approach, for membership was officially an honour and responsibility open only to a select minority. In theory, candidates for membership were to be chosen from the 'non-party *aktiv*, people who took an interest in trade union, soviet or other social work'.<sup>62</sup> These people were to be approached personally by party representatives at their workplace, such as the *grupporg* or cell secretary, possibly after production or other factory meetings. 'It is very important', wrote the Serg i Molot party secretary in 1929, 'that leading skilled workers, especially older production workers, feel and see that we take notice of their views, and trust them.' Optimistically, he added that 'These leading workers will then join the party.'<sup>63</sup> After a discussion at which the applicant's political views and motivation were explored thoroughly, his or her name could go forward to the workplace party committee. A further scrutiny followed, after which the names and records of satisfactory candidates were sent to the *orgraspredotdel* of the local *raikom* for approval. The MK *orgraspredotdel* did not take an individual interest, although it was supposed to monitor the number of recruits and their overall progress.<sup>64</sup> Successful applicants then began their 'candidate stage', the minimum length of which, for workers, was six months. At the end of this period, if they satisfied the various educational and other requirements, they were eligible for promotion to full membership, which involved a repeat of the process described for initial recruitment.

All this demanded sustained vigilance and enthusiasm on the part of the *aktiv* in the cells, and commentators were aware that the burden

was often too great. Some activists were incompetent, more were overworked and lacked the opportunity to approach individual workers and discuss the complex issues of party life with them in their spare time.<sup>65</sup> Accordingly other methods of recruitment were introduced as the targets successively increased. In 1927 a special commission was established in the *guberniya* to deal with the October Enrolment. Its approach was to send 'troikas' of party officials into the factories to drum up recruits, a task in which they were so successful that the technique was retained after the campaign had ended.<sup>66</sup> Although the 'individual' approach continued to be encouraged, 'campaigns' to keep numbers up became the staple means of recruitment. Thus election campaigns of all kinds, and later, episodes of socialist competition and shock work were used as opportunities for pulling more workers into the party.<sup>67</sup>

If the 'individual approach' was impracticable as a means of satisfying the quotas of the first Five Year Plan, the campaign method brought other problems. Too often the *grupporgs*, confused and overworked, simply abandoned all pretence of recruiting, and the project was left to the party committee in the factory, which could give the matter only cursory attention. The emphasis on numbers led all recruiters to overlook the criteria for suitable candidates. In 1927 89 per cent of workers who applied for membership in Zamoskvorech'e raion, but only 60 per cent of students, were permitted to become candidates.<sup>68</sup> After 1929 the directive about recruiting 'the best shock workers' into the party was frequently interpreted as meaning all shock workers, and whole shifts would be recruited at once, regardless of the individual merits of the members.<sup>69</sup> In Serp i Molot in 1930, the party committee printed ballot forms for the Soviet elections which also invited workers to delete the words 'I join the party' and 'I join the Komsomol', an 'error', as they later confessed, 'which would only have led to a growth on paper'.<sup>70</sup> In the struggle to produce impressive figures, workers were sometimes deliberately misled about the responsibilities of party membership. One group of seasonal workers was found to have been told that they could join the party '*po-sezonno*', on a seasonal basis, letting their membership and responsibilities lapse in the slack season.<sup>71</sup> A frequent explanation for *otsevy*, the loss of party members, was that they had joined 'accidentally' in the first place.<sup>72</sup>

Such baits were needed because the opening of the party's doors to the mass of workers did not lead to an immediate rush to join. Party membership was not something to which large numbers of Moscow's citizens aspired in this period. The party press, in its campaign to

overcome this reluctance, attributed it to the widespread but misplaced modesty of workers. Party membership, it was argued, involved both 'political literacy' and a commitment of time, and workers felt that they were unequal to both. Excuses included pleas of old age, inadequate knowledge and family commitments. As one worker put it, 'I haven't joined the party because I am old and ill and the years are slipping away. I couldn't do anything for the party and party members must have heavy responsibilities.'<sup>73</sup>

Behind these rationalisations, however, were more concrete grounds for resisting the drive, of which officials were aware, but which reflected on the party less agreeably. Party membership brought privileges, such as improved access to education and the possibility of promotion into administrative jobs in the workplace or in the party's own apparatus. But for large numbers of workers these benefits did not compensate for the perceived drawbacks of membership. Among these were membership dues, which, although scaled to take account of income, represented an unwelcome charge on the average budget.<sup>74</sup> But money was less significant than the overall responsibility of party membership, the requirement that the party be the highest priority in its members' lives. Even if many people in fact avoided party duties, the burden could be heavy and individual examples of overwork were reported often enough to deter prospective members. An investigation in 1927 reported that in one Moscow factory, party members might be expected to attend up to thirty-three meetings a month.<sup>75</sup> A survey conducted in 1925, before the hectic years of the first Five Year Plan, found that of a sample of 304 members and candidates, 119 were chronically ill, while a further 34 complained of ill-health. The most common illness was neurasthenia, followed by lung disorders, malaria, anaemia and stomach disorders. The nervous complaints were blamed on the Civil War, but the stresses of party life, combined with the poor living conditions of the period, were known to aggravate the problems.<sup>76</sup>

Very few people were capable of carrying out all their party duties effectively in these circumstances. However enthusiastic they were, therefore, party members were open to criticisms of negligence. Parallel to its forbiddingly demanding image, the party acquired a reputation, sometimes deserved, for incompetence. In *Serp i Molot* in 1928 only 30 per cent of party members attended the plenary meetings of the cell, and the party presence at general factory meetings was even lower.<sup>77</sup> As workers at the factory commented, 'they make plans about how to build socialism the day after tomorrow, but how party work in their own shop is going is something they don't see'.<sup>78</sup>

More serious were the abuses committed by some party members. It was hard to regard people who regularly drank and vandalised factory property as the representatives of the vanguard of the proletariat. Although the sources do not suggest that the majority of the rank and file were drunkards, it took only a few cases to create an unfavourable impression. An incident at the Tsindel' factory was typical of the problem. A Communist called Gorshkov went out one evening and got so drunk that he could hardly stand. Coming home with a prostitute he had picked up at the Saratov station, he smashed some of the windows in his hostel, although he only noticed the cuts in his hands the following morning, and had to ask the factory administration to give him time off for them to heal. 'Non-party workers', noted the report, 'laughed when he asked this.'<sup>79</sup> Another party member complained to his local Control Commission when he discovered that his party card did not entitle him to buy vodka without queueing. When he was admonished for this mistake, he lost his temper, and tore up his party card in the Control Commission's office.<sup>80</sup>

Corruption was also common, and the bribing of workers for career and other purposes.<sup>81</sup> Above all, the condescending behaviour of many Communists created antagonism. Some older workers feared that if they joined the party, they would lose their friends and be seen as careerists,<sup>82</sup> an impression reinforced by the behaviour of some party members. One Communist, watching a worker in his factory making a poster for a local campaign, began to laugh at his simple-mindedness, but when asked to explain to the worker what was wrong, put his hands in his pockets and walked away.<sup>83</sup> Another group of Communists got drunk and started firing revolvers at the workers as they passed.<sup>84</sup>

These problems, though serious, could be discussed in the press, because they reflected on individuals rather than on the party as a whole. They even had a use as moral tales, and were thus printed regularly although they probably did not reflect the daily experience of most Communists. What did not reach the press was evidence of hostility to the party itself, although this was indeed a factor affecting recruitment. Sometimes the cause was a specific scandal, such as the Chinese debacle of 1927. More often it was simply general hostility. 'I wouldn't join the party,' one woman, critical of the imposition of the 'general line', declared in 1928. 'If you're going to join, you have to cut half your tongue out first.'<sup>85</sup> As the organisation with ultimate responsibility for government decisions, the party was also blamed for material hardships, unpopular work regulations and poor living conditions.<sup>86</sup>

In the light of these circumstances recruitment levels in Moscow begin to seem more impressive, and it is surprising that more recruits of these years did not leave the party. There was a certain amount of official concern about the loss of members, but in general alarm was unjustified. Local membership figures occasionally declined, generally as the result of a protest resignation in a specific factory, but overall only about three per cent of members left the party annually.<sup>87</sup> Undoubtedly, however, the recruitment campaign involved mistakes at all levels, and brought problems in its wake for local and national officials. At the time of the purges of 1929 and 1933, many Moscow workers were found to have joined the party ‘accidentally’, and others failed to re-register, thus ‘mechanically’ forfeiting their membership. The time spent on recruiting them, and the resources required to train them, had been wasted. At the same time, the party’s reputation had suffered, the admission that unsuitable candidates had been recruited raising questions about the significance of party membership in general. As the first Five Year Plan came to an end, mass recruitment was proving more troublesome than it was worth.

## PROBLEMS OF MASS RECRUITMENT

The most obvious problem caused by the pace of recruitment in this period was the number of new members admitted who for various reasons were unsuitable.<sup>88</sup> Typical of the difficulties were new members’ expectations that they would receive material goods as a reward for joining, as in the case of Bauman’s vodka drinker, or their unwillingness to pay party dues and carry out duties.<sup>89</sup> Others found that hard living conditions made the concentration and sacrifice of party life impossible.<sup>90</sup> A further worry for local party officials was the claim that many recruits felt neglected after joining, and left because they considered themselves to be superfluous.<sup>91</sup> Between April and June 1928, an average of 47 per cent of candidates left the party, and in the year as a whole, the figure was about 20 per cent.<sup>92</sup>

For the local cells, processing the new candidates proved a daunting task, and many were incapable of ensuring a smooth progress for new recruits through training to full membership. Articles appeared frequently in the press criticising the proportion of candidates who had exceeded the normal candidate stage. In 1932 a report found that 70 per cent of candidates in one Moscow factory were overdue for promotion, a figure which was not regarded as unusual.<sup>93</sup> Often the reason was simply

overwork. The local cells could not cope with the volume of paperwork involved, or organise the courses and ensure regular attendance by candidates who were likely to be under strain themselves. In other cases candidates were not promoted because they failed to satisfy even the basic requirements for promotion.

However, incompetence also had a part to play, and the factory cells were not always principally to blame. A particularly scandalous case appeared in *Rabochaya Moskva* in 1925. Comrade Mukhin had joined as a candidate in 1923, before the mass campaigns. In May 1924, he applied for full membership, but his papers were lost by the *raikom*. He therefore re-applied, after waiting two months, and was told to wait another two, which he did. He then wrote a personal letter to the *raikom* secretary, but had to wait a further two months for a reply. Finally his application was approved, and he was asked to pay his membership dues retrospectively for the period of the delay. The letter he wrote to *Rabochaya Moskva* was his resignation from the party.<sup>94</sup>

In conditions where all active party members were overworked, the temptation to use candidates in low-level posts was irresistible. Directives on the need to involve them in party life specified that they should early be given responsible tasks. A situation soon arose where candidates were fulfilling many functions for which they were not qualified, from *grupporg* to cell secretary. *Pravda* reminded its readers in 1925 that 'the presence of non-party people at cell meetings is one of the most valuable achievements of our party. But inviting non-party people to all party meetings leads to a situation in which the role of the party becomes blurred, and the distinction between party and non-party fades.'<sup>95</sup> Repeatedly the leadership had to stress that candidates were not full party members. Officially their attendance at closed meetings was also forbidden, and they had no voting rights. Where their promotion was long overdue, however, and when numbers alone were required as proof of 'activism', it was tempting for cell secretaries not to insist on the difference between candidates and full members.

A number of measures for alleviating these problems were tried. Party cells were established not only in individual factory shops but also, from 1929, in as many shifts and work brigades as possible. One of the aims of this restructuring was to reach every potentially sympathetic worker. Enlarging the structure made broad recruitment even more important, however, as the party sought activists for night shifts and 'backward' factories. To combat the cheapening of party membership, the purge of 1929 removed a certain amount of 'ballast', although the need to retain as many proletarian members as possible inclined the

commissions to overlook shortcomings which would have been condemned in office employees or students. The system of party education was reformed and strengthened, although finding suitable propagandists and even affording textbooks and providing classrooms remained a problem (see Chapter 7). In particular, to cope with the mass enrolments of 1929–31, ‘candidate schools’ were set up in the *raions*. In 1929 they processed only 12.8 per cent of candidates in Moscow, but by 1932 they were preparing over half for full membership.<sup>96</sup>

The impact of these reforms on the various problems posed by mass recruitment proved marginal by 1932. Their continued failure was used to explain the cessation of mass recruitment and purge which followed, and it is unquestionably true that the need to preserve the party’s ‘vanguard’ status demanded that indiscriminate recruitment should end. Discussions began openly in 1931, though as early as 1930, party spokesmen had been advocating the recruitment of ‘the best representatives of the intelligentsia’ to accompany high proletarian quotas.<sup>97</sup> An article in *Rabochaya Moskva* in August 1932, headed ‘Raising High the Title of Party Member’, quoted Lenin’s injunction that ‘we must try to raise the name and significance of a member of the party higher and higher’. It emphasised the individual’s responsibility to ensure that his or her work justified continued party membership, concluding that ‘we must raise the ideological quality of party work, and the principled approach to the assessment of every Communist Party member’.<sup>98</sup> At the same time the press began to carry letters criticising the neglect of ‘educational work’ which had accompanied the all-out drive for production.

Was this perceived ‘failure’ of the mass recruitment drive the only reason for its abandonment in 1932? It is likely that it was not, since the problems had been ignored or tolerated for five years. Moreover, the abandonment of mass recruitment coincided with a number of other retreats from radical ‘proletarian’ policies, including the steamlining of the party’s structure and an attack on *uravnilovka*, the policy of equal wages for workers and specialists. With the ending of the first Five Year Plan, the regime no longer felt a need for direct mass support, and the problems it had created outweighed its advantages. After 1932, on virtually all fronts, the emphasis shifted to discipline. Management and experts, provided they remained loyal and successful, enjoyed more power and status than they had since 1928, and their relatively cautious estimates of output potential governed the second Five Year Plan in contrast to the first. In part, as will be seen later, this change was possible because the ‘mass’ policies of the first Five Year Plan had



already broken the power of the 'bourgeois' specialist (see Chapter 8). Once this goal had been achieved, it was possible to abandon the troublesome mass party. What was needed after 1932 was a distinct and reliable vanguard, recruits for party and professional training schemes and promotion to administrative and specialist jobs, rather than cheer-leaders on the factory floor. However, most of these future specialists had themselves been recruited during the mass campaigns. The period of mass recruitment had a lasting impact on the party's composition.

### THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

Between 1925 and 1932 the party in Moscow more than doubled in size, and increased the proportion of production workers in its ranks from about 45 per cent to over half. The largest single social group among new recruits in the period was workers, its proportionate share among new recruits reaching a peak in 1930. Although the 'party layer' in most industries was less than 20 per cent on average, it was unlikely that people anywhere in Moscow would not know a Communist at all. This represented a great improvement in terms of the party's visibility and ability to keep in touch with the population. Moreover, many, possibly a majority, of these new Communists had party responsibilities of some kind. The party was not only visible, but also clearly active, centrally involved in 'socialist construction' in all its aspects.

The grounds for concern were about the 'quality' of these party members. A substantial number of mistakes occurred. Illiteracy, corruption and overwork all featured in official criticisms of the new generation. But the important point is that these vices were not unique to the latest recruits. Corruption remained a problem for the party, despite stricter criteria for membership, and was almost inevitable where membership provided access to scarce privileges. Moreover, at all stages of the recruitment campaigns of the 1920s and 1930s some officials feared the worst. The problems created by the Lenin enrolment of 1924, for example, were trivial compared with those of the first Five Year Plan campaigns, but critics like Mandel'shtam could not foresee that things might get worse. Accordingly, their comments about 'dilution' and the threat to discipline need to be compared very carefully with any made later when recruitment was proceeding many times faster. Criticisms of recruitment, like any official statement of the period, cannot be taken at face value.

In general, the recruits of 1925–7 were cadre workers with a genuine commitment to the ideals of the party. The decision to slow down the pace of worker enrolment in 1925 was influenced as much by political considerations and nervousness as by genuine difficulties with the new generation, and the ‘October Enrolment’ of 1927 was mainly successful. In 1928 over half the cell secretaries in Moscow were recruits from the first ‘Lenin Enrolment’<sup>99</sup> and by 1932 the majority were recruits from the period since 1927.<sup>100</sup> The proportion of members who had joined before 1917, the *podpol’shciki*, declined steadily at all levels of local politics.<sup>101</sup> It was the generation of recruits admitted after 1929, when the campaigns became less selective and officials in the factories could devote less time to vetting candidates, which produced the most problems. Apart from the unsuitability of many of the recruits, there were problems training and supervising them, especially when the people responsible for their party education were themselves relatively recent recruits. The secretary of one cell in Moscow explained how the old guard, the recruits of the 1924–7 period, ‘left us as promotees for work in other places. They had been very useful in the apparatus, and had made work in the factory easier’. Now life had changed, and the factory could no longer spare cadres for work outside its own walls.<sup>102</sup>

The recruits of the 1924–9 period had a major impact on the party. As Lenin had predicted in 1921, a party in power was likely to develop differently from an underground organisation, attracting people who were interested in power and government. Lenin had meant the comparison pejoratively, as a justification for the 1921 purge, but the implications of the change were not necessarily only negative. As the party was now unofficially responsible for government, it needed a core of administrators at all levels who were dedicated to improving daily life on a local basis. It was precisely this type of person, even if critics might call him or her a careerist, who was attracted by the recruitment campaigns of the 1920s, and who went on to form the professional backbone of the party, studying in night schools during the ‘cultural revolution’ and taking over in the factories in the 1930s.<sup>103</sup>

Another aspect of the recruitment campaigns, the truth of which is seldom questioned in the West, was their political purpose. The theory runs that Stalin sought to overwhelm the Left Opposition, and any other potentially maverick tendencies surviving from the pre-revolutionary period, by swamping the party with new recruits in the mid-1920s. Trotsky was not the only person who believed this. One foreign correspondent based in Moscow wrote that

The inference was obvious that this new membership [the Lenin recruits], which amounted to nearly twenty per cent of the total strength of the Party at that time, would be hand-picked by the Secretariat, through its subordinates in Moscow and the provinces. When it subsequently became known that the new members would have a right to vote for delegates at the next Party Congress, the full import of the manoeuvre became clear; the Secretariat had boldly added twenty per cent of the total electorate to its own supporters in what bid fair to be an evenly-divided contest.<sup>104</sup>

If that was Stalin's purpose, mass recruitment turned out to be a mixed blessing. The new recruits, especially those who joined the party before the end of 1928, were not like blank pages awaiting Stalin's handwriting. Like existing party members, they had lived through the Revolution and Civil War, and were aware, if they were interested in politics sufficiently to join the party, of the debates of the time. Recruitment may have been a useful way of showing how much support the party enjoyed among the working class, *pace* the Left, but to suggest that the new generation were all passive dupes of the General Secretary is to underestimate the interest that the average worker had in the progress of the Revolution, both in general and in terms of his or her own prospects in the new society. Those who did not have this interest tended to stay away from politics altogether.

Mass recruitment enhanced the party leaders', and thus Stalin's, position for other reasons. As the party expanded, so communication between the senior and rank and file levels became more difficult. Even if the leadership had wanted to do so, it would have been difficult to consult the views of the ranks on a systematic basis. And the incorporation of new members became more difficult, adding to the sense that between full-time *apparatchiki* and ordinary Communists 'at the bench' there existed an unbridgeable cultural gulf. *Verkhi* and *nizy* lived separate lives, ostensibly working for the same goals, but in fact understanding their tasks very differently. This widening division inevitably increased the power of the full-time secretaries, since the lower levels of the party were clearly incapable, if only because of their numbers, of participating in important policy decisions. At the same time the ranks could be blamed for any practical failures, and frequently were so blamed. Dedicated though the *aktiv* may have been, and the evidence from Moscow suggests that most activists were eager to fulfil the tasks entrusted to them, they could always be called to account for

the failures of centrally-planned policy. Mass recruitment was stopped when the leadership began to see the problems for central control and public image awaiting a party which could no longer make special claims about the moral and political qualities of its members. But it had been a convenient campaign. It had brought the party into many more people's lives, while preserving the authority of the leadership as a separate and privileged group.

## 7 ‘Political Education’, Agitation and Propaganda

Propaganda was acknowledged to be a high priority by the Bolshevik leadership. During the Civil War it had been a crucial, even decisive, tool for winning support among ordinary people, especially in the remoter rural areas of the Soviet Union. ‘Agit-trains’, touring theatre companies and propaganda films were all used between 1918 and 1920 to win recruits for the Red Army and consolidate support for the new regime in front-line areas.<sup>1</sup> To staff these units, propagandists had to be trained in their thousands, a task undertaken by the party schools and later the Communist universities. The lessons learned during the Civil War continued to be applied after 1920. Indeed, a ‘campaign’ style characterised much Bolshevik propaganda in the Stalin period. But the priorities changed as the country began to recover from its post-revolutionary crisis. By 1925 the prime purpose of ‘political education’ was to prepare potential party members for administrative positions. More broadly, agitation among the ‘non-party mass’ aimed to raise general literacy, increase awareness of current issues and build support for party policy.

Bolshevik propaganda was far from sophisticated. Compared with modern techniques, which include careful advance public opinion research,<sup>2</sup> the Bolshevik approach was spontaneous and betrayed a fundamental optimism about the perfectibility of human beings. At least in the 1920s, before party recruitment ceased to discriminate among workers, propagandists exposed their students to a wide range of arguments and Marxist texts in the hope that all potential party members would learn how to apply the ‘scientific’ principles of Marxism to practical problems.<sup>3</sup> This optimistic, even idealistic goal was seldom entirely achieved; often participants were hard put to it to read basic Russian.<sup>4</sup> The abstruse intellectual constructs of late-nineteenth-century Western European political theory were beyond their grasp. But the motive behind this sort of political propaganda – education – should not be overlooked. Bolshevik propaganda of course developed a manipulative aspect, as does the propaganda of any government, but

its basic didacticism endured. People were to be educated, although this education, it was understood, must always prepare them for action<sup>5</sup>.

Mass work, which was not exclusively the responsibility of the party, had broader goals. The achievement of mass literacy was one, perhaps the foremost. Another, which became more important as the regime began to demand more sacrifices and efforts from its workforce, was mobilisation. Industrial workers needed to be motivated to work for little reward. Even peasants were not simply coerced, though no propaganda could cancel out their suffering in the early 1930s. In this area, however, the party often miscalculated. It was not the case that people believed everything they were told. The greater the gap between propaganda image and reality, the greater the risk that the propaganda would fail to convince.

Although the party developed a centralised structure for agitation and propaganda, including party-controlled government agencies (in particular Narkompros and its sub-department Glavpolitprosvet<sup>6</sup>), streamlining at the top had little effect at the grass roots, where propaganda was presented to the ordinary party member or citizen. It is true that as a result of party control of the press and other media, many areas of national life, in particular high politics, became inaccessible to ordinary people, and it became more difficult to think in certain ways about current and past policy. But these were negative achievements. A 'new Soviet person' was not created in Moscow by Bolshevik propaganda in this period, and the regime could not rely on its *agitprop* to secure for itself totalitarian control of society. Moreover, the relationship between propagandist and audience involved exchanges in both directions. The generation which had witnessed the Revolution of 1917 was not always passive, and at the point of contact between propagandist and audience, be it classroom or factory canteen, the Moscow propagandist sometimes found the audience getting the better of the argument.<sup>7</sup>

Within the party apparatus, both agitation (work among people who were not Communists) and propaganda (political work among party members) were the responsibility of the *agitpropotdel*, or APPO. Its head was a member of the MK secretariat, although he or she ranked second to the head of the *orgaspredotdel*.<sup>8</sup> The other members included a deputy head, the editors of the Moscow Party newspapers and journals, and representatives from the *raion* and *uezd* APPOs. It met about three times a month to co-ordinate its activities and to hear reports about aspects of its recent work. In addition a number of responsible instructors were attached to the APPO at the MK and

*raion* levels. They acted as a link between the APPOs and groups of enterprises, checking on the fulfilment of directives and giving advice.<sup>9</sup> Below this level, where APPO workers were full-time officials, were the propagandists, usually part-time activists who ran courses of party education, and the less prestigious agitators (the difference between the two was often obscured in practice). Finding people to do this type of work was a major problem. There were always more campaigns being initiated 'from above' than there were people trained to implement them. And the problem was exacerbated by the fact that *agitprop* work was a relatively low priority compared with more pressing administrative tasks.

## PARTY EDUCATION

Western scholars tend to link party propaganda with indoctrination. The idea that new recruits were trained as unquestioning supporters of the current line has been widely accepted.<sup>10</sup> It will be argued here that the picture of a smoothly-disseminated 'party line' requires review. In Moscow at least, many new recruits in the 1920s held political views of their own, and all recruits, of whatever generation, had specific material interests to defend. Political classes in Moscow were more controversial than is often supposed. The party press, moreover, was more concerned with practical problems than with the creation of 'new people'. Rapid recruitment after 1924 created major educational problems. There was an urgent need for immediate practical training. Those who were to chair meetings, act as secretaries or carry out other administrative tasks needed to know how to cope with paperwork and personnel as well as assimilating something of the 'scientific' Marxist approach to problem-solving.

The first educational hurdle, indeed, was basic literacy. Party theorists naturally regarded literacy as a necessary pre-requisite for further political education.<sup>11</sup> Illiteracy was less of a problem in Moscow than elsewhere in the Soviet Union, but it remained a stumbling block. Statistics on adult illiteracy vary widely (see Table 7.1). Statisticians attempted to exaggerate the progress made after 1917, which involved distorting pre-revolutionary achievements. At the same time, the criteria for 'literacy' varied from survey to survey, as did the age at which people were considered to be adults.<sup>12</sup> So the scale of the problem is hard to judge. The lowest figure quoted in this period for illiteracy among Moscow party members was 3 per cent.<sup>13</sup> But this may not be

Table 7.1 Education of party members by social situation (1927)

Social Group	Education				
	Higher (%)	Secondary (%)	Primary (%)	Self-taught (%)	Illiterate (%)
Workers	0.1	3.9	63.9	30.3	1.8
Peasants	0.1	3.6	60.9	28.5	6.9
<i>Sluzhashchie</i>	3.0	20.9	62.8	12.8	0.5
Others	1.6	12.7	51.9	30.5	3.3
Total	0.8	7.9	62.8	26.1	2.4

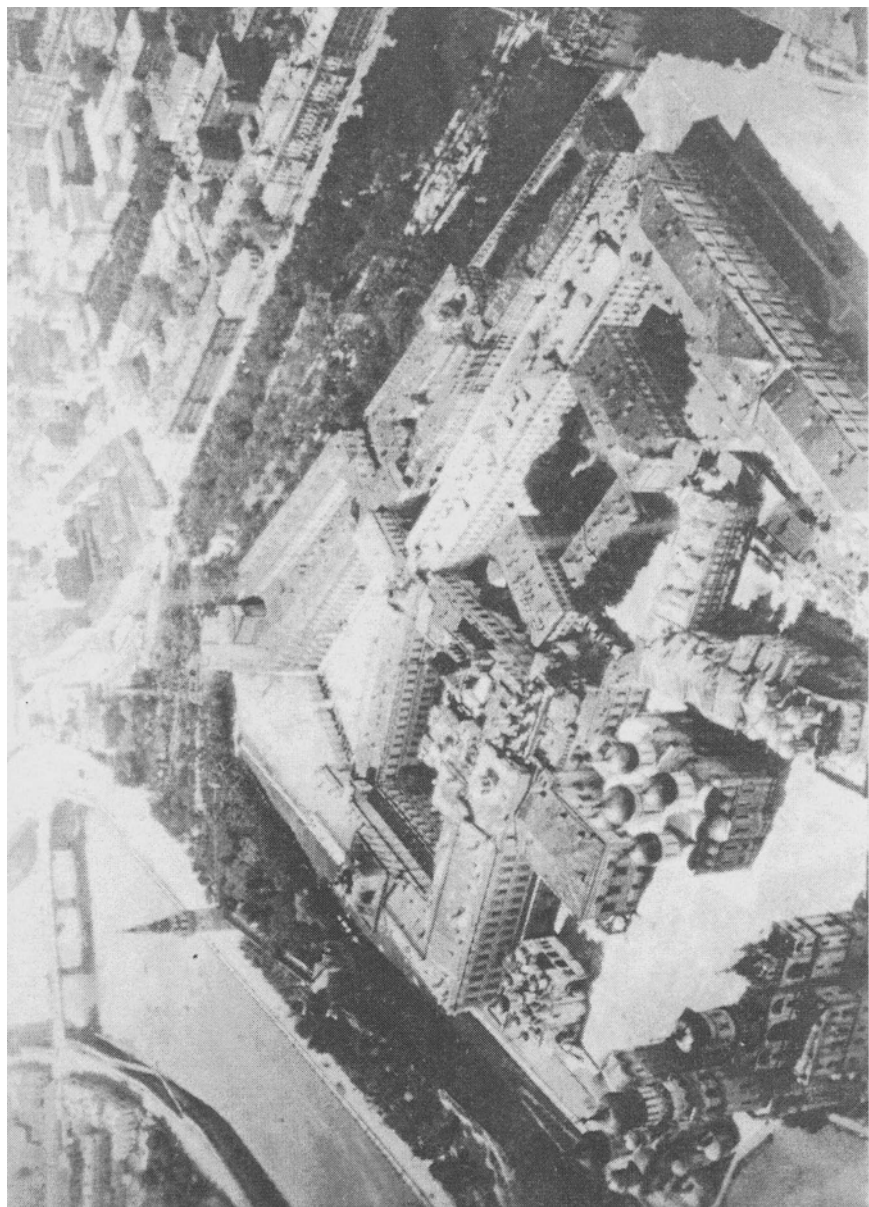
Source: E. Smitten, *Sostav Vsesoyuznoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (bol'shevikov)*, (Moscow, 1927) p. 60.

accurate; overall illiteracy among workers in the city of Moscow in the mid-1920s has been estimated at 14 per cent, and in the province as a whole at 24 per cent.<sup>14</sup> In 1930 a survey of 2573 workers at the AMO motorworks found that 75 were illiterate and 1462 had only elementary education.<sup>15</sup> So in a factory employing a good deal of skilled labour, almost half the workers interviewed (the total workforce was 3800) were at best no more than literate. The average level of illiteracy would also have risen as the proportion of migrants (not all from the Moscow province) settling in the capital increased.<sup>16</sup>

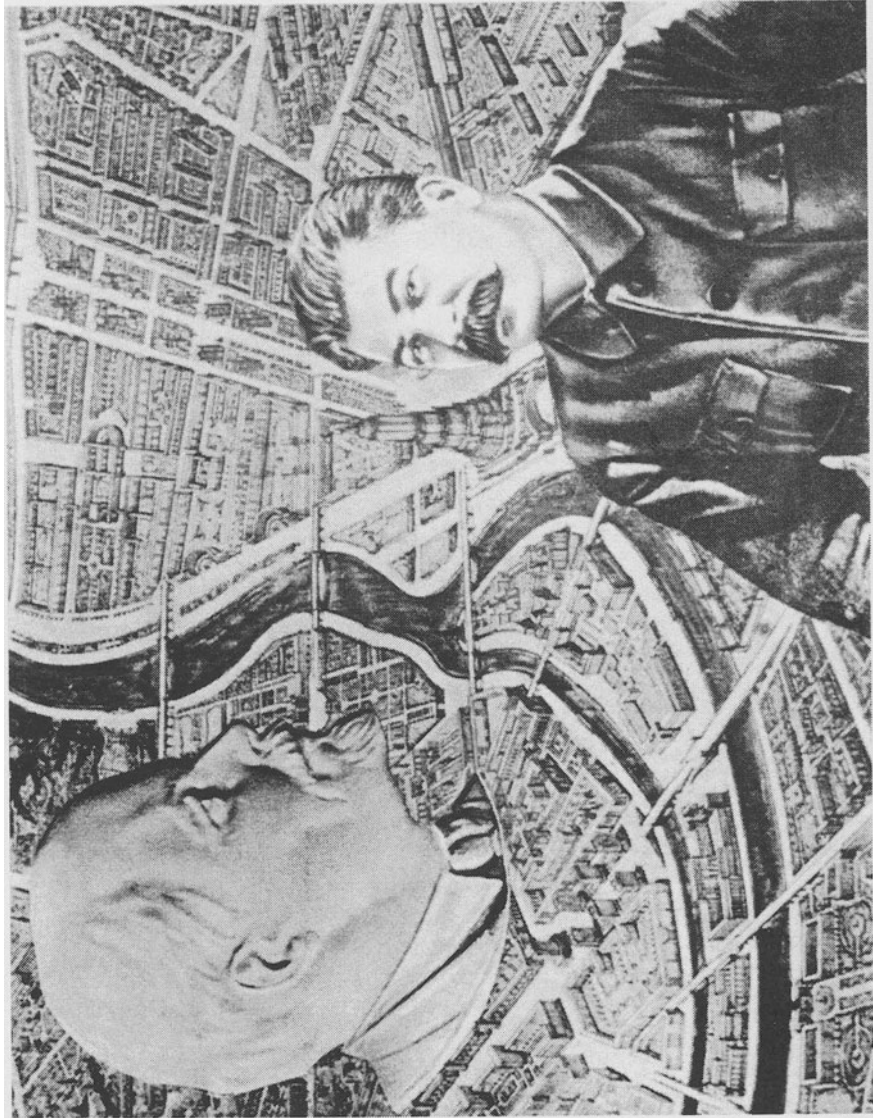
Even when they were not technically defined as 'illiterate', however, it is clear that a large proportion of party members and candidates lacked the skills of fluent reading and comprehension necessary for reading Marxist texts or the involved speeches of their leaders. Figures collected for the national party census in 1927 showed that only 8.7 per cent of party members, and no more than 24 per cent of Communist white collar employees (*sluzhashchie*)<sup>17</sup>, had completed courses of higher or secondary education. In Moscow, where there were fewer peasant Communists, and many more white-collar workers, than the national average, the proportion of party members with higher or secondary education must have been slightly greater, but the lack of specialists was a problem everywhere.

All programmes of political training were hampered by recruits' lack of learning skills and basic general knowledge. This must be borne in mind when considering official figures for 'political education', which show how many members were enrolled in the various courses offered





1. Aerial view of the Kremlin and central Moscow, 1930.



2. The Stalinist plan for the reconstruction of Moscow, including a model of the Palace of Soviets (centre), which was never built.



3. Trotsky addressing a crowd of supporters, late 1920s (location unknown).



4. Kalinin, Molotov and Uglanov (*right*) at the fifteenth Party Congress, December 1927.



5. Karl Yanovich Bauman, first secretary of the MK, 1929–30.



6. 1927 cartoon: 'The Nepmen completing their tax returns'.

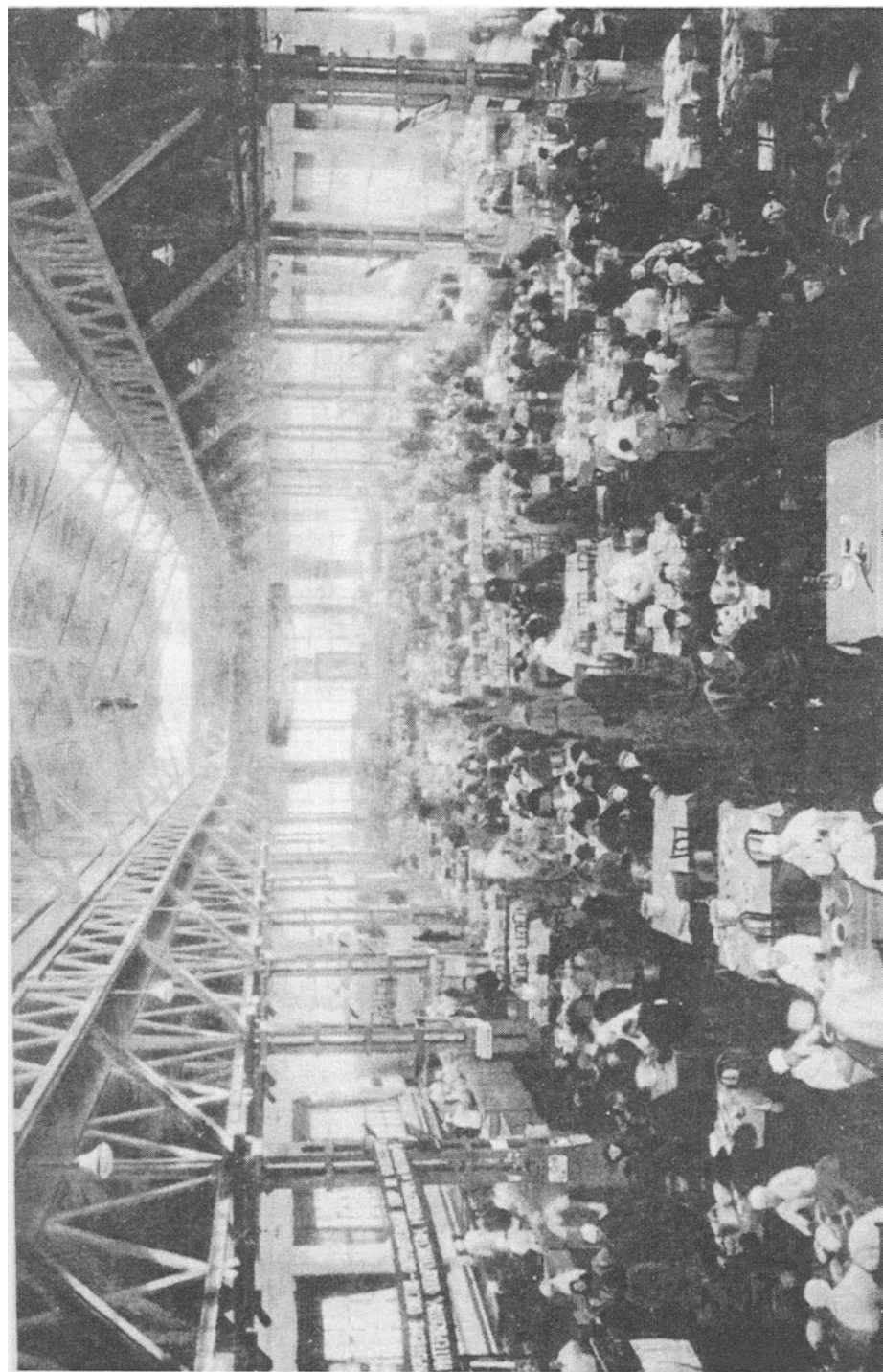




7. The headquarters of the Moscow Party Committee in the 1920s.



8. Moscow's Elektroavtomat factory, built in the late 1920s.



9. Communal facilities: canteen at the AMO factory, 1930.



by Communist propagandists. Although the enrolment figures appear impressive, and the texts studied could be complicated or abstruse, the scheduled courses were seldom satisfactorily completed.<sup>18</sup>

The statistics for enrolment in education courses were nonetheless viewed with optimism at the time, possibly because of the contrast with earlier years. In Moscow in particular there were grounds for believing that political education for all party members was a realistic goal. Nationally 41 per cent of party members had completed courses of political education in 1927.<sup>19</sup> A later survey of the Moscow party put participation in the capital even higher, a reflection of the city's social structure and privileged access to resources.<sup>20</sup> Among these privileges was the density of higher education establishments of all kinds. Their facilities were available to the MK in the holidays and evenings and their students, as well as participating in political education on their own accounts, were available to act as propagandists in the city.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the Moscow party organisation was expected to provide specialists, including teachers, for other areas of the Soviet Union. There were thus considerable pressures on it to show a good training record. By contrast with other industrial areas the capital could ill-afford to neglect political education. It became a lower priority during the first Five Year Plan, but it was never dropped from the political agenda.

From the early 1920s a tiered system of party education evolved to cope with the wide range of needs. Basic education was provided by the schools of 'political literacy' (*politgramota*), small classes in factories or workers' clubs, open to anyone, whether or not they had joined the party.<sup>22</sup> These were modified after the Lenin Enrolment in order to prepare large numbers of recruits for party life as quickly as possible.<sup>23</sup> There were two courses offered, the first and second grades. In the first grade students learned the party programme and rules and were instructed in the principles of current policy. The course was expected to last three months, and students who failed to complete it successfully were not supposed to be permitted to join the party or to repeat the course. The ease of the course is reflected in the fact that illiterate and semi-literate students were allowed to join it if they also agreed to learn to read and write.<sup>24</sup> The number of first-grade schools was loosely linked to the rate of recruitment. In 1927, the number of classes was reduced, but by 1930 attention again turned to this kind of political education.<sup>25</sup>

The second grade at the political literacy school taught the principles of current economic policy, Marxist economics in general and the history of the Communist Party. Only students who had completed

the first grade could join, and the course, consisting of classes once a week,<sup>26</sup> lasted for seven months.<sup>27</sup> Like the first grade classes, the number of these classes was reduced after 1927. In 1928 the two grades were abolished and a single school of political literacy (*edinaya shkola*) for all recruits and interested people who were not party members was introduced.<sup>28</sup> Students who successfully completed both these courses would almost certainly join the party, after which they would be under pressure to attend the *sovpartshkola*, or party school.<sup>29</sup> Here, further instruction in party history, current affairs, economics and even such subjects as mathematics and geography would be given. In 1927 classes at this level were typically held twice a week in Moscow, after work, and lasted for four hours.

The other type of education offered to party members was the 'study circle'. Although ostensibly more independent, discussions in these circles were supposed to be carefully directed.<sup>30</sup> Among the texts chosen were the collected works of Marx and Lenin. Alternatively study circles could focus on specific aspects of theory or policy, often using articles from the party journal *Bol'shevik* as discussion material. These 'subject' (*predmetnye*) circles were regarded as the most effective method of dealing with particular aspects of theory, and were officially encouraged. As late as 1930, the Central Committee agreed that circles were 'the most versatile method of teaching individual theoretical Marxist-Leninist disciplines to the broad ranks of the party *aktiv*'.<sup>31</sup> After 1927, however, the increasing number of new recruits with very limited reading and discussion skills made this form of study difficult to organise. Claims were made at the local level that there was no demand for study circles, and funding in individual clubs dropped off.<sup>32</sup>

Beyond this level, party education was aimed at training the *aktiv*. The *sovpartshkola* also had a second grade, where classes covered political economy, economic geography, party history and other questions related to party work. Classes were held three times a week in four-hour sessions.<sup>33</sup> Short courses on party structure and practical work followed all election campaigns and were aimed at new cell secretaries and other activists. The number of places on these courses grew considerably in this period, as formal classes were supplemented by the '*sovpartshkola* at home', a correspondence course,<sup>34</sup> and by short, intensive summer or Sunday courses. In 1929 10,000 people in the Moscow *oblast'* were studying within the network of *sovpartshkoly*.<sup>35</sup> The pre-eminence of Moscow as a training centre at this level was clear. In 1928, for example, a directive from the Central Committee required that courses be established in major centres for

the training of party members who had been selected for senior political posts. Moscow was to take 1125 of these people, while Leningrad was allocated only 500 and Kharkov 750.<sup>36</sup>

The top level of the study system was the *komvuz*, or Communist university. In all there were nine *komvuzy* in the Moscow *guberniya*, eight of them in the city itself.<sup>37</sup> Moscow activists from the *raikoms* and more important committees could attend courses at establishments like the Institute of Red Professors, which trained future party officials, and also organised evening and summer courses on specialist practical subjects. The range of subjects covered was wide, including 'Russian, arithmetic, political economy, Leninism, history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, history of the revolutionary movement of the West, party structure and dialectical materialism'.<sup>38</sup> The most important specialised centre for professional activists was outside Moscow at Zvenigorod. Established in 1925, it took small numbers of students, selected on the basis of quotas for each *raion* and department of the MK, for three-month full-time courses. The minimum requirements for individuals were two years' party *stazh*, one year of party work and basic skills including 'reading, writing and whole-number arithmetic'.<sup>39</sup> The number of leading activists enrolled on specialist courses was relatively small. At the level of the provincial committee, only 350 people were enrolled on *komvuz* courses in 1929.<sup>40</sup>

This extensive, tiered network looked satisfactory on paper, but as with all party work in this period, optimistic plans often failed to bear fruit at the local level. Although conditions had improved since the early 1920s, an acute lack of resources continued to beset the education system. Most serious was the shortage of people capable of teaching courses. The ideal propagandist would have been trained, not only in Marxist theory but also in communicating, especially with factory workers. But the party had neither the time nor the resources to devote to this task. The result was that propagandists were often ill-prepared, and their conduct provoked complaints from all quarters.

A large number of propagandists in the early 1920s were graduates or students at Moscow VUZy. In 1925/26, for example, 119 Moscow propagandists were from the Institute of Red Professors, 114 from the Sverdlov University and 111 from Moscow State University, together accounting for about a fifth of Moscow's propagandists.<sup>41</sup> At this stage, such graduates included a large proportion of non-proletarians. Propaganda was viewed in intellectual Bolshevik circles as a crucial tool, and attracted many activists from the pre-Revolutionary underground.<sup>42</sup> The problem with this 'bourgeois' bias was that few

propagandists possessed the skill of communicating with ordinary workers. Even if they had proletarian origins themselves, students soon lost touch with the factory floor or the village community. Complaints from the consumers about the content of courses and style of delivery were frequent. The idea became widespread that propaganda work was the task of the intelligentsia, making classes even less attractive to workers and discouraging them from training as propagandists themselves.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, many propagandists had no time to get to know their students, and their aloofness earned them the nick-name of 'touring actors'.<sup>44</sup> It was to solve this problem that the Zvenigorod scheme was first set up in 1925. A similar training school opened later at Arkhangel'skoe. Courses here were designed to produce up to 1000 extra propagandists a year, for work in Moscow and elsewhere. The number of propagandists did increase, but their quality remained a problem. The proportion of propagandists with higher or secondary education fell after 1925. After 1928, when the overall demand for propagandists increased sharply, training courses were shortened and complaints about the 'quality' of the new trainees proliferated.

Until the end of the 1920s the party also responded to the shortage of teachers by using people whose political backgrounds were less than wholly reliable. In 1925 about a third of Moscow's propagandists were former members of other parties, including the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries.<sup>45</sup> Their knowledge of Marxist theory was often excellent, and for some of them propaganda work provided a welcome foothold in the new regime. Some made themselves indispensable to the Bolsheviks.<sup>46</sup> But others allowed off-beat ideas to be discussed in their classes. On the subject of Kautsky, for example, one ex-Menshevik answered a query from a student by musing that 'I've never agreed with Il'ich [Lenin] on this point'.<sup>47</sup> Former oppositionists often showed a reluctance to follow the current party line, suppressing the centre's criticisms of dissident groups, while they themselves posed as politically 'neutral' Marxists.<sup>48</sup> The party press discussed this problem, but no suggestion that 'unreliable' propagandists should be sacked was made until 1929. The party was obliged to make use of these people as long as general political education remained a priority. In the 1920s at least, more significance was attached to the acquisition of basic 'political literacy' than to drilled loyalty to specific policies. But the purge of 1929 ended the era of the 'unreliable' propagandist. Soon after it, the more ambitious aspects of theoretical Marxist education were dropped in favour of simple, campaign-style courses.

Even after the older generation of propagandists had been purged,

however, the sharp turns in party policy perpetuated the problem of political heterodoxy. Moreover, the proletarian propagandists who took over were not necessarily more reliable, from the leadership's point of view, than their 'bourgeois' predecessors. Worker propagandists of the new generation had scant experience and very little training. Even if they believed themselves to be loyal, their classes could be erratic or even prejudicial to official interests. In 1930, for example, a worker propagandist in the *Serp i Molot* factory concluded a discussion of the Right deviation by holding a poll among his students to determine 'who was for Stalin, who for Bukharin'.<sup>49</sup> Deliberate expressions of politically suspect views were also frequent; this was a time when policy changes deeply affected the interests of ordinary people in town and countryside. Collectivisation caused particularly strong dissension. A 1930 survey of the ten worker propagandists in one area of the *oblast'* found that 4 had received strict reprimands for breaches of party discipline and 2 had explicitly deviated from the party line when leading discussion circles.<sup>50</sup> From 1929 onwards, concern about 'co-ordinating' the work of propagandists featured in every issue of the APPO journal. The claim that 'Soviet propaganda ... succeeded in reinforcing the commitment of the propagandists'<sup>51</sup> needs to be set against the fact that many propagandists knew that the material they were given in party journals was unusable in local circumstances. While many undoubtedly continued to mouth the slogans nonetheless, a substantial number adapted official material to suit the needs of their audiences. These adaptations were not always merely cosmetic.

The other problem was the strain imposed by rapid industrialisation after 1929. There was no time for discussion, and few people could be spared to attend training courses. Indeed, there was a tendency for trained propagandists to be deployed in other work when they returned to their factories, usually to work with a direct bearing on production.<sup>52</sup> By 1930 40 per cent of all propagandists in Moscow had been working for the APPO for less than a year.<sup>53</sup> The loss of propagandists to the provinces did not fully account for this rapid turnover. In response to the pressure on party education, the Central Committee passed a resolution in September 1930 proposing measures to redeem the quality and quantity of classes. The effect, however, was to increase the stress on the overworked network. Among the Central Committee's directives was an announcement that by the end of the current academic year, 50 per cent of propagandists at the basic levels should be workers by occupation.<sup>54</sup> The number of propagandists grew rapidly as a result. In *Serp i Molot*, for example, there were 7 propagandists in 1930, 22

in 1931 and 60 in 1932.<sup>55</sup> The number of workers 'by social situation' serving as propagandists also increased. In 1928/29, only 7 per cent of Moscow propagandists had been workers by social situation. By 1930 the proportion had risen to 20.4 per cent (14 per cent of whom were still 'at the bench'). But this was far short of the required 50 per cent. To achieve even this much expansion, moreover, training programmes became rushed and cursory. The preparatory course, once of three months' duration, was shortened, by 1930, to six weeks.<sup>56</sup> The cost of the combined policy of short courses and more workers was clear. In 1931 *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* complained that the quality of propagandists had never been lower. It called for the reintroduction of three month courses, as well as stressing that propagandists should not be used for other party work.<sup>57</sup> But rapid turnover, poor quality and low worker enrolment continued.

The overall shortage of suitable trainees was also only part of the explanation. A more fundamental problem was that propaganda was regarded as a lower priority than production-related work. The workers themselves often resisted appeals for them to become propagandists, preferring the more familiar and practical world of technical education.<sup>58</sup> Factory party committees who succeeded in finding workers eager enough to be trained for 'responsible party work' were unlikely to let them train as propagandists. Propagandists in factories were often 'hoarded'.<sup>59</sup> Disrespect for political studies was widespread among the people who had to find the time and resources to organise it. As the cell secretary of the Parizhskaya Kommuna factory remarked, studying interfered with the fulfilment of the plan.<sup>60</sup> Propagandists with other party responsibilities left the preparation of classes until the last moment, reading teaching materials 'on the tram on the way in'.<sup>61</sup>

Propaganda suffered in other ways from its low status. Apart from the shortage of propagandists, basic teaching materials were also often lacking. Among the problems were the shortage of suitable premises. One report stated that propagandists should have access to a chair, blackboard and paper, suggesting that often these were not available. Textbooks were another problem. Apart from the general shortage of books, there were difficulties making them accessible to ordinary readers, problems keeping up with radical changes in policy and personnel, and the challenge, never satisfactorily met, of making the books interesting, let alone attractive.

Initially the prescribed texts, including philosophical works on Marxism, were incomprehensible to many worker Communists. In response to the needs of worker recruits, the resources were

found to produce simpler works like Yaroslavskii's *Short History of the VKP(b)*.<sup>62</sup> However, until the middle of 1930, more complicated texts still commonly featured in reading lists for the party schools. A 1929/30 course on the history of the Comintern for Moscow's urban unified schools specified chapters from Lenin's collected works, speeches by Molotov and Bauman and Bukharin's *Notes of an Economist*.<sup>63</sup> Study circles tackling the 1930 course on political economy were prescribed Marx's *Kapital*, a number of commentaries on it by Russian and German Marxists, and lengthy essays by Bukharin and Rosa Luxemburg.<sup>64</sup> The propaganda of the 1920s included arguments about politics at sophisticated levels. Where controversies between members of the Politburo were involved, the 'general line' would be clearly stated but references to the original works of the minority group would also be given, and their views would receive more than a minimum of coverage.<sup>65</sup>

By April 1930 the lists had changed. Works by European Marxists, with the exception of Marx and Engels, no longer featured in bibliographies for propagandists, and works by Russian Marxist theorists had almost disappeared. In their place, the bulk of reading now consisted of extracts from the speeches of Stalin or Molotov, very short extracts from the works of Lenin and Stalin, often only a page in length, and prescribed pages from Kerzhentsev and Leont'ev or Yaroslavskii. Even before Stalin's intervention of October 1931, therefore, a new tone could be detected in propaganda material. After the publication of his letter in *Proletarskaya Revolyutsiya* the stress on clarity, simplicity and homogeneity in party education materials became even firmer.<sup>66</sup> All suspicion of debate disappeared from propaganda material, which concentrated on giving as many 'facts' as possible rather than on developing arguments about crucial issues. The sentences were kept simple, using limited vocabularies and portraying arguments without qualification. Many of the propaganda materials read like printed versions of the party posters of the period, triumphant in tone and simple in substance. Statistics were another favourite feature, but they were carefully chosen, and were used only where they unconditionally supported the current line. Figures would be given about the economy or party recruitment, but based on only a small section of the whole. As we shall see later, even these reforms did not guarantee strict party loyalty among propagandists and their students, prompting the leadership to seek other means of disseminating the official line.

Not surprisingly a frequent criticism of party education made by workers was that it was 'divorced from real life'.<sup>67</sup> Simple messages

may have convinced the least sophisticated; certainly that was the intention. However, they also had a negative effect. By insisting on a single line, the party leadership sacrificed their credibility in the eyes of people who could see the reality – economic or political – for themselves. As one consumer recalled of classes in the period 1933–5, ‘Every experience in history was black or white, trends and tendencies were simplified. Every question had a perfectly definite answer. Not only that, but the formulation of the answer must be thus and so. When you followed the rules, everything made sense. It was a system built up like arithmetic. The only trouble was that it did not always correspond to objective realities’.<sup>68</sup> Propaganda, a precious tool for the makers of the new state, was thus devalued unless it could be filtered by activists sensitive to the mood of their audience. Courage as well as skill was needed for this, and few activists could devote much of either to propaganda during the first Five Year Plan.

In view of the other demands on their time, it is surprising how many workers and party activists persisted with education courses. By 1929 about a third of party members had some formal political training.<sup>69</sup> In 1925 about 45 000 people were studying on basic party courses in Moscow and the Moscow *guberniya*, while a further 35 000 were on advanced courses.<sup>70</sup> The APPO’s estimate in 1930 was that 15 per cent of party members in the Moscow organisation as a whole were enrolled on some kind of political education course,<sup>71</sup> though the figure for the city alone would have been higher. Satisfied customers were proud to have attended party education courses. Among the benefits conferred by regular attendance at a party course, the ability to understand the newspaper was regarded as valuable.<sup>72</sup> In general members reported that the classes had helped them to understand current affairs and especially the complicated debates among Russia’s political leadership.<sup>73</sup>

Enrolment, however, was not the same as consistent attendance, and for every satisfied student there were several who were discontented or failed to complete the course. Like the leadership, party members were often forced to relegate propaganda work to the bottom of their list of priorities. Although the classes were described as ‘voluntary’, it was not uncommon for pressure to be applied to people to make them enrol. Thereafter, however, the ‘voluntary’ principle was taken as implying that further attendance was unnecessary. A sufficient gesture had been made.<sup>74</sup> The other demands on members’ time were more pressing, and studying less exciting than the active work of ‘socialist construction’. On average about a third of those who enrolled failed to complete the courses, many dropping out after only one or two



sessions.<sup>74</sup> The highest rate of drop-out was among party activists, 56 per cent of whom left courses in Bauman *raion* in 1932, suggesting that the problem of other work was uppermost.<sup>76</sup> Their example was not lost on the rank and file. Starved of resources, courses were often unattractive, while the heavy burden of party work left little time for them. Disciplinary measures were rarely taken against absenteeism from classes. It was not uncommon for courses to fold after a few weeks, and very little pressure would be applied to re-open them.<sup>77</sup>

The gap between official line and reality also contributed to the unpopularity of classes. Reports of workers who 'failed to understand' issues like the banning of factions or the difference between the Left and the Politburo majority indicate that the classes were not filled with passive students who would accept whatever they were told. Among the political terms which workers were found 'not to understand' in 1926 were 'democracy', 'socialism', 'class enemy' and 'USSR'.<sup>78</sup> While some of this 'misunderstanding' was undoubtedly the result of poor general education, difficulties with political terms also signified political differences between student and propagandist. Many of these 'erroneous' political conceptions at this stage no doubt originated with people's revolutionary experience. Few people, illiterate or not, lived through the Revolution without forming some notion of 'democracy', and it should be no surprise that this conflicted with official Bolshevik versions by 1926.

In all, the system of party education, separate from other party work and held in free time, was at best a limited success and did not provide the party with a loyal and fully reliable rank and file. In view of the bewildering zigzags in official policy, it was difficult always to be sure of the 'general line'. The need for activists to have some ability to think independently and to solve problems presented propagandists with the problem of how much open discussion to allow. This question was never settled. At the same time, problems of low general education, boredom, overwork and hostility to the tone of propaganda led to low completion rates on party courses. Many recruits let party education pass them by. Activists themselves neglected their classes, and official toleration of this showed that priority was not given to training where practical work might suffer. Parallel to the party education network, however, were a number of other, more effective, channels of communication between the leadership and the rank and file. These included live speeches and public demonstrations such as rallies and 'party days'.

In a society where active literacy was not the general rule, but which still lacked mass access to radio, live speeches played a crucial part in spreading ideas and information. Large meetings addressed by leading

party orators, a striking feature of the Revolution itself, were still common. Bukharin and Rykov were especially frequent speakers in Moscow in the late 1920s, to be superseded in 1929 by Molotov, Ordzhonikidze and Stalin. The contents of their speeches were relayed to the party rank and file by 'activists' from the audience. Any party member who had participated in a congress, conference, plenum or other meeting, was expected to report back to a meeting at his or her place of work. Occasionally, especially in larger cells, senior party officials would deliver the reports. Where no politically sensitive issue had been discussed, the meetings might be 'open' to anyone, though 'closed' meetings and meetings of hand-picked activists were more common.

The evidence suggests that rank and file party members were interested in political affairs, especially where high-level quarrels were concerned, or their own direct economic interests. They were not afraid to raise awkward issues.<sup>79</sup> Although questions generally had to be submitted in advance, and agendas controlled the range of discussion, the meetings could be lively. In cells where there was no reliable speaker, however, or where political education was neglected, there was no guarantee that political issues would be loyally discussed. Sometimes no report at all would be given. Any tendency to neglect report meetings intensified as the range of the party's practical tasks increased. At the same time the deliberations of the Central Committee became more secretive. The scarcity of information provoked awkward questions from the floor. Finally, the economic hardships of the early 1930s prompted many to question the correctness of the party line, or just to speculate about the seriousness of the country's situation. By the autumn of 1931 doubts were being expressed by prominent figures such as Postyshev about the propaganda network's reliability, about the quality of the newest generation of activists and about the loyalty of party speakers in general.<sup>80</sup> The search began for more directed means of informing the rank and file about current affairs.

One of the solutions adopted was the 'party day' (*partden*). Originally introduced in 1921, it was described then as 'a day for the strengthening of the party, not filled with soulless reports, but with speeches and discussions about the party's current tasks, and also about its history, victories ... and heroes ... so that on this day each party member shall feel himself to be ... a fighter for a great ideal and a member of a great party'.<sup>81</sup> The idea was regularly to set aside a day for party work, including study. If all members were involved, then the temptation to shirk would be lessened. To prevent drift and boredom, the subjects for study would be arranged on an all-city basis, with local

newspapers co-operating in the publication of study materials. Party days were held in Moscow in 1924 and 1925.<sup>82</sup> For the rest of the decade, however, the subject of the 'single party day' received scant attention in the press, and it was not until 1932 that the idea was revived and seriously implemented.

In April 1932 the MGK called for party days to be organised twice a month in all Moscow party cells. The move was prompted by the Central Committee's concern about party members' low ideological commitment. Investigations into party study conducted in Moscow in 1931 had found that the existing system still lacked the personnel or the appeal to attract and train the mass of party members.<sup>83</sup> Their loyalty was also a cause for concern. In an atmosphere of economic crisis, when many official policies were unpopular, effective propaganda was more important than ever. Although party education remained a lower priority than practical work, debate about it was widespread by 1932. The suggested solution to the problem, in common with many other policy changes of this year, involved more centralisation and a curbing of local initiative.

The first party days in 1932 received widespread publicity. The need to put current developments in a positive light was reflected in the first discussion topic, which was called 'the economic achievements in the first quarter of 1932'. Other subjects covered included the international position of the USSR, the ninth Congress of Trade Unions and the forthcoming autumn harvest campaign. In principle, the press pointed out, the 'days' were an improvement on party schools. First, the subject matter was more practical, and closely linked with the day-to-day concerns of workers. Second, because the subjects were decided well in advance, discussion materials could be collected. The major sources of materials were the press and leaflets issued to propagandists by local party organisations. In some cases, workers themselves also organised exhibitions. In *Elektrozavod*, for example, exhibitions about life on a *kolkhoz*, the rabbit campaign,<sup>84</sup> industrial processes and other subjects were mounted in 1932.<sup>85</sup> Finally, intensive publicity gave the 'days' a campaign feeling, raising their importance but indicating that the effort could be concentrated on a single day and then relaxed. According to a party pamphlet, concessions were made by all participants in the campaign, and included the provision of good catering facilities and of more interesting speakers drawn from the factory administration, trade unions and medical services as well as the party itself.<sup>86</sup>

The experiment was most successful in the *Elektrozavod* factory, where attendance at the party days increased steadily between April and September 1932.<sup>87</sup> In Moscow generally attendance was

encouraging. Short meetings, often held in factory canteens at lunchtime, attracted large audiences, although audience concentration under the circumstances must have been limited. In Krasnaya Presnya, some factories achieved 90 per cent overall attendance rates at meetings on party days, including people who were not party members.<sup>88</sup> On the other hand, not even the intensive campaigns adopted over party days could overcome the problems of apathy, overwork or even hostility in some cells. While praising Elektroavod's record, for example, *Rabochaya Moskva* noted that some factory cells had done nothing to prepare for recent party days, while others failed to make them interesting.<sup>89</sup> In view of the daily experiences of most factory workers, such apathy was not surprising. Talks on 'economic achievements' must have had a hollow ring to many ears. The gap between official propaganda and real life was sometimes awkwardly large. A report of 1932 noted with regret that a gas explosion which had destroyed the lamp department in Elektroavod had forced the survivors to abandon propaganda work for more pressing tasks.<sup>90</sup>

At a time when the leadership was increasingly interested in controlling the information available to its population the most reliable form of communication between the centre and the grassroots was the party press. Moscow Communists were bombarded with advertisements urging them to subscribe to the many party publications available. These included national and local newspapers and journals and local factory newspapers. Despite the availability of newspapers and periodicals, however, official concern was repeatedly expressed about the low subscription rates and small readerships of key publications. What did the party press offer its readers?

The newspaper with the largest readership in Moscow was *Rabochaya Moskva*, officially the organ of the MK, Moscow Soviet and MGSPS. Between 1928 and 1930, it had a circulation of 112 500, comparing favourably with other local papers, including the evening paper, *Vechernyaya Moskva* and the *guberniya* paper, *Moskovskaya Derevnnya*, and with *Pravda*.<sup>91</sup> This circulation needs to be seen in perspective, however. As a correspondent in the Serp i Molot factory newspaper, *Martenovka*, observed in 1929, *Rabochaya Moskva* had the largest circulation in the factory, but three-quarters of workers did not receive a paper at all.<sup>92</sup>

*Rabochaya Moskva's* popularity over *Pravda*, which was also at least partly an organ of the MK, can be explained by the space it gave to local news and to short stories and serials. In the early 1920s *Rabochaya Moskva* appeared in tabloid form, with up to ten pages. Later it was

produced in a standard format, but continued to carry the same broad mixture of articles. The first page would be devoted to the main news stories, but reports of local events, such as the flood of 1926, could occupy pride of place as easily as the more austere reports of the Central Committee. Inside, although one or two pages would be devoted to party matters, short stories, especially adventure stories or tales from exotic corners of the USSR like Kazakhstan, could be expected, as well as news of local projects, including the construction of an underpass under Okhotnyi Ryad, the demolition of churches and the building of children's holiday centres in the Moscow woods. In 1926 the paper ran a gruesome series on health problems and simple anatomy, in 1927 a short collection of articles on life in China.

*Rabochaya Moskva's* reporting of political news and party campaigns was also excellent in this early period. MK plenums, for example, were reported verbatim, and even the more important speeches at factory cell meetings were given generous coverage. The proceedings of national level conferences, congresses and plenums were also reported as they happened, with verbatim reports of speeches and fuller accounts of discussions even than appeared in *Pravda*. Furthermore, *Rabochaya Moskva* published answers to some of the questions Muscovites were asking about the Left in the mid-1920s, and was one of the few organs of any stature to give space to the opinions of Rightists in 1928.

The informative approach of the 1920s had given way to a more laconic style by 1932, although local incidents still received substantial coverage. In October 1928, the Rightist editor of *Rabochaya Moskva*, P. V. Antoshkin, was replaced by V. N. Barkov. This was to be the first of a series of rapid editorial changes.<sup>93</sup> By July 1930 the paper had dropped most of its reporting of MK plenums, which were hereafter referred to well after they had occurred, and then without reference to the main speeches made. The party pages concentrated on prescriptive articles about better production work or discipline, together with uninformative statistical pieces about such matters as election campaigns and socialist competition. The appeal of the major daily paper therefore declined after 1930. In that year, another major source of information was also reorganised. The MK journal *Sputnik Kommunist*, criticised for its poor production, was merged with the more factual, centrally-directed *Izvestiya Moskovskogo Komiteta*.<sup>94</sup> Whereas the latter confined itself largely to the same party coverage as *Rabochaya Moskva*, *Sputnik Kommunist* had been the local version of *Bol'shevik*, containing reports of Central Committee debates, together with discursive contributions about their implications and the best ways

of tackling current problems. It also ran a number of pieces on theoretical questions, and although debate was muted, genuine differences of approach were encouraged, sometimes with editorial participation. After 1927 it also encouraged contributions from the Moscow party *aktiv*, who were invited to pool their experiences of problems and campaigns. Despite the appeal of some of its material, it had a small readership, reaching fewer than one Communist in eighteen.<sup>95</sup>

The same problem beset other party journals, including *Propagandist*, the *agitpropotdel*'s own journal. This provided material for propagandists to use in their work, including simplified question and answer discussions on current topics. As a source of information, it tended to lag behind current events, and many of its articles seemed out of date before their appearance. In 1928, for example, at the time of the defeat of the Moscow Right, it made no reference to the affair. Other journals controlled by the propaganda organs included *Sputnik Agitatora*, another *agitpropotdel* journal, and *V Pomoshch' Partuchebe*, a journal jointly run by the Central Committee and MK *agitpropotdels*. The *raions* had their own papers, with smaller circulations and a greater concentration on local matters.<sup>96</sup>

At the local level were the factory newspapers, which appeared in a number of formats and were not subject to censorship. Although not exclusively the responsibility of the party cell, they often devoted large amounts of space to party affairs and included on their editorial boards at least one party representative. Among the more successful of these papers were *Martenovka* from Serp i Molot, *Motor* (later *Kirovets*) the Dinamo paper, *Vagranka* the AMO paper, and *Dvigatel'* the paper of Krasnyi Proletarii. The financial bases of these papers were always precarious, and their readership unwilling to subscribe. *Martenovka* disappeared altogether for months at a time because of financial problems.<sup>97</sup>

The differences between individual papers can be illustrated with reference to *Dvigatel'* and *Martenovka*, extracts from which can be read in Soviet archives.<sup>98</sup> While *Dvigatel'* concentrated on production issues, and contained debates about improving the factory's performance through the introduction of new shops, *Martenovka* seems to have run more articles on party work, and generally on political problems in the factory. The balance of material was a matter for the editorial committee in the factory and was not controlled by the Moscow APPO, although party authorities took a close interest in the papers and frequently criticised them for failing to carry out specific agitational tasks.<sup>100</sup>

Informative and even critical articles<sup>101</sup> were encouraged, but the papers remained turgid and were thought not to address the problems which interested workers.<sup>102</sup>

At the bottom of the hierarchy of local papers were the wall newspapers, *stengazety*. These were not exclusively the responsibility of the party cell, and relied for most of their material on the workers' correspondents (*rabkory*) who produced regular articles. Although they avoided the financial problems of the factory papers, they suffered from the same shortage of articles and lack of enthusiastic support. A report published in 1928 noted that only about 3 per cent of workers ever contributed to wall newspapers, and that they often completely failed to appear.<sup>103</sup> Wall newspapers seem to have been mainly devoted to local, factory questions, including rationalisation suggestions from workers, and were not intended as a major source of information about party activities.

## AGITATIONAL AND MASS WORK

The distinction between party propaganda and mass agitation was a volatile one. The party was after all a mass party. Equally the party leadership had always considered that 'political literacy' was a priority for everyone. It is important therefore to consider 'mass work' when examining party propaganda. In addition, mass work was the responsibility of every party member, and thus provides a prism through which the party's work and image at the grass roots can be assessed.

The first problem was deciding which issues should be closed to the non-party masses. Open party meetings were not supposed to discuss sensitive political issues, including the oppositions of the 1920s, problems of discipline among party members or the finer points of current economic policy. Communists were reminded that they were set above the rest of society. They were encouraged to underline the distinction by setting an example of 'Communist behaviour' in all spheres of public and private life. They were also supposed to explain current policy to other workers whenever the opportunity arose. This deliberate singling out of Communists created animosity in many places. On one hand it fostered feelings of insupportable superiority on the Communists' part, while on the other breaches of the codes of behaviour set up by the party inevitably led to criticism.

Despite the official distinction, however, the differences between rank and file Communists and their non-party colleagues were blurred. They

were the same factory workers, working in the same shops and reading the same papers. Some lower-level party education courses were open to non-Communists, who were encouraged to attend as a means of drawing them into the party's ambit. Attendance rates among non-Communists, indeed, were usually better than those of the party activists, who had less time. Similarly, non-Communists were warmly invited to open meetings and 'party days'. So unclear was the boundary between the party rank and file and their colleagues that cases where non-party people or candidate members took on party responsibilities were not unknown. This blurring encouraged the secrecy with which the professional party apparatus increasingly concealed its deliberations from its own rank and file.

Because of this overlap, 'agitational work' was often directed as much at the party rank and file as at the rest of the population. But party members were still expected to be different, ready with the correct answers, identified with party policy and eager to stand by it. Confusion and resentment inevitably followed. The most direct form of agitational work was informal discussion between Communists and their colleagues at work. Party members were encouraged to take any opportunity to air political issues, including lunch breaks, spare moments at work and even informal discussions at home.<sup>103</sup> The aim was to establish a two-way line of communication, so that ordinary people's views could reach the party and the party's policies could be explained to them. These informal conversations had many disadvantages, although they were continuously advocated. Where Communists were scarce, agitational work would be neglected; it was almost completely absent from night shifts, for example.<sup>104</sup> Discussions could not be supervised, and occasionally broke down as the non-party worker appeared to be getting the better of the argument. They were also easily avoided by embarrassed or ill-informed Communists, reluctant to embark on unstructured political discussions in their colleagues' free time.<sup>105</sup> Where practical tasks were pressing, agitational work might be forgotten. As one critic remarked, 'Some comrades have party legs, but they do not have a party head'.<sup>106</sup> At the other extreme, carping activists made more enemies than converts, despite official remarks about the need for tact.<sup>107</sup> A more formal approach was sought to supplement these individual initiatives. The mass organisations, including trade unions as well as the party, were used as channel for agitation. In addition, wall newspapers, posters and the local press were used to reach literate workers and *sluzhashchie*.



Meetings of all kinds suffered from the same handicap as far as agitation was concerned. Often dismissed even by party devotees as 'boring', they were held in free time. People who lived far from their place of work were thus unlikely to attend, as were women, whose domestic burdens occupied all their spare time. Shift work also reduced the number who could attend meetings. Nonetheless, party open meetings at the factory level could attract large numbers of non-Communists where the subject matter was interesting. A report of 1927 in *Bol'shevik* noted that non-party people were most interested in economic questions, local issues, production and trade union questions and party discipline. All-factory meetings in Krasnaya Presnya where these were discussed could attract as many as 150 people from outside the party.<sup>108</sup> The increasing secrecy of party life put a limit on the use of open meetings, however. Even economic questions, where they included the reviewing of problems, were kept secret, in some cases even from the party rank and file. The open party meeting became little more than a platform for exhortation and encouragement, occasionally also serving as a forum for the discussion of local production difficulties.

The trade unions, with their large memberships, were a more promising channel for agitation. A common pattern was for the party cell to discuss a production matter and then mandate the Communist fraction of the *zavkom* to raise it in the trade union meeting. Notoriously, however, the trade union committees were less efficient even than the party cells. One problem was that trade union activists tended not to have much party or even general education beyond the elementary level.<sup>109</sup> Mass work delegated to the *zavkom* generally had to be closely supervised by the party cell. Election campaigns to all mass organisations, including the trade unions and the soviets, also provided platforms for the discussion of current policy. Here again, the party cell generally took responsibility for co-ordinating the reports and speeches. Voting at elections increased sharply, comfortably exceeding 90 per cent by the end of 1932. On the other hand, attendance at meetings, as has already been mentioned, and even voting, did not necessarily reflect enthusiasm or attention to the speech on offer. The extent of workers' real commitment to these meetings is very difficult to assess.

Meetings were not the only other medium for communication. From the late 1920s onwards propagandists made increasing use of workers' clubs. These facilities, mainly funded by the trade unions, were intended as places where information could be dispensed and approved cultural activities enjoyed. Not all factories had a club; many shared with

neighbouring establishments, but the demand for them was considerable, and pressure to establish clubs for all major factories continued into the early 1930s. In the early 1920s many clubs were lively meeting places, but their use as centres for 'mass work' gradually squeezed out the opportunities for popular cultural events during the first Five Year Plan.<sup>110</sup> As early as 1927 the major growth area in their programmes was 'mass work', mainly political propaganda. A report on the expenditure of clubs controlled by the metalworkers' union in 1927 found that spending on 'mass work' had increased by 24.4 per cent, while spending on independent 'circle work' had dropped by 17.9 per cent and that on 'libraries' by 4.4 per cent. The next largest growth area was 'physical culture', but spending on this had increased by only 3.6 per cent.<sup>111</sup> Whereas broadly cultural activities, especially cinema, still dominated the clubs in 1929, political meetings, lectures, reports and discussions were the main activity by 1932.<sup>112</sup>

For the literate population the final channel of communication with the party was printed or written material, the press or pamphlets available in libraries. The quality of the press has already been discussed. Wall newspapers were often supplemented by the displays in 'red corners', exhibitions, posters and notices available in a permanent area of the plant or office. As space became scarcer, however, 'red corners' were squeezed out, often in favour of extended canteen facilities.<sup>113</sup> Exhibitions were replaced by pamphlets and papers, available in clubs and from the offices of *agitprop* departments. These pamphlets explained recent decisions, summarising controversial policy changes and discussing economic questions. Their popularity is hard to determine, especially as workers were encouraged to borrow them whenever they also wanted a popular light read such as a novel. On the other hand, it is clear that they reached smaller, more exclusively literate and more committed audiences than permanent displays and wall newspapers. Agitation's lower priority compared with production was a serious barrier to mass political education.

Looking at the propaganda process as a whole, it is possible to draw a number of conclusions about its role in party work. Although acknowledged to be important, it was neglected throughout the period, and especially after 1929, when practical tasks absorbed party members' time and energies. Because it was a low priority, and because it also lacked the kind of resources required for such an ambitious programme, it failed to provide 'political education' for all, or even to ensure that most people would be familiar with the main provisions of official policy. From late 1930 a new concern for propaganda was perceptible

among political leaders, but the impact of reforms undertaken before 1932 was unsatisfactory from their point of view. It is unlikely that people became unquestioning supporters of the current official line as a result of changes implemented in this period. It is difficult to determine what people's political beliefs amounted to, how much of the official line they absorbed, and how far they held views at variance with it. The source materials – public opinion surveys, diaries, letters – either do not exist or are inaccessible. The possibilities for oral history for this period are rapidly fading. Although a number of surveys into workers' attitudes towards political affairs were conducted during the 1920s, they were seldom asked to give their view of the party. Indicators like party membership, we have seen, could be misleading, as could attendance rates at meetings. The beliefs and political opinions of ordinary Soviet people during the rise of Stalin will probably have to remain a subject for speculation.

Only one or two general points can be made with confidence. First, it is clear that the response of intellectuals and white-collar workers to the party was different from that of workers. In general, propaganda work among the former groups was a low priority. The approach of party work in the 1920s was heavily biased towards the working class. The same attitude which restricted non-workers from entering the party led to a neglect of propaganda work in Moscow's offices. Even white-collar factory staff were left out of many campaigns.<sup>114</sup> In 1928 the Shakhty trial marked the beginning of a period of assault upon the rights and position of specialists. Hard on its heels came the party purge of 1929 and the purge of the state apparatus of 1930. It was only after 1930 that a more liberal policy towards specialists emerged,<sup>115</sup> and with it came more attention to propaganda work among them.

The attitude of workers was mixed. As Soviet sources emphasised, political attitudes among this group were largely determined by skill levels, sex, age, landholding and other factors. Workers with 'links with the countryside' were unlikely to join the party and equally unlikely to sympathise with its aims, especially after 1929.<sup>116</sup> Textile workers, especially women, were also largely unmoved by political propaganda, although economic questions were crucial and food shortages or wage cuts could lead to strike activity. Consistent complaints were made about 'seasonal workers' and workers in the transport industry, who took very little interest in political discussions. As with recruitment, the most fertile ground for propagandists appears to have been the skilled metal working trades, and also some sections of the chemical and leather industries. Age was also a decisive factor, the younger

workers showing much more sympathy for the party's goals than the older, established workers.<sup>117</sup> No group, however, was passive when it came to propaganda; even party enthusiasts brought their practical experience and individual understanding of politics to bear when presented with a propagandist's text. While thinking certain thoughts became more difficult – they were never allowed to reach the public media – the leadership remained incapable of 'educating' people to think in the desired fashion. Open dissidence was checked only by party discipline and by the fact that one of the few goals which the mass of the urban population shared with its political leaders – economic expansion – required the maximum collective effort.

## 8 The Moscow Party Organisation and Moscow Industry

Among the party propagandists' problems was the consumers' lack of enthusiasm for abstractions at a time when material tasks were pressing from all sides. One such task, often the most important, was the reconstruction and development of industry. Many of Moscow's Communists were based in factories, either as workers 'at the bench' or as administrative staff. For them, production issues were paramount. Factory party cells discussed nothing so frequently, and many meetings discussed nothing else. For the Moscow party leadership too industry was a major issue. These were years of rapid transformation, and although the party was not the only body involved, in general ultimate responsibility for industrial development in Moscow lay with the Moscow Committee and the Kremlin.

The pace of change was astonishing. In 1925, the capital was still primarily a textile centre, 'calico Moscow'. From the end of 1928, despite the lack of local raw materials, the emphasis began to shift away from textiles to the metal, electrical and other 'heavy industries' (see Table 1.3, p. 16). New factories were built in the city, including the electrical giant, Elektrozavod, and the bearings works, Sharikopodshipnik, which claimed to be the largest factory in the world. Others were rebuilt, such as the AMO automobile works, which closed for two years while it was completely refurbished, reopening in 1931 as the Zavod imeni Stalina (ZIS), and the Serp i Molot metal works, which was refitted to produce fine quality alloys in the early 1930s. In the course of this transformation, thousands of new workers were added to the Moscow proletariat, including peasants straight from the villages. New skills had to be taught at all levels, from shop floor to technical specialist.

These tangible achievements engendered considerable enthusiasm, especially in the period 1928–9. Party members were not alone in welcoming the changes as evidence that Soviet power was at last delivering the promised new industrial Jerusalem. But enthusiasm was not enough to secure the success of the industrialisation programme. The administrative burden weighed heavily on the party at all levels.

An examination of the Moscow party's role in industry illustrates its practical effectiveness and provides examples of interaction between the different tiers of the party, between the party and other state organs, and between the party and Moscow's working population.

## THE PARTY AND THE ECONOMY: OFFICIAL VIEWS

No official statement required local party organisations to intervene closely in industrial affairs. On the contrary, the tendency of most official pronouncements was to assert the economic organs' autonomy from party intervention. But the exact division of responsibility between the party and the economic bodies, which were themselves headed by party members ultimately answerable to the Central Committee, was unclear. Officially the leading organs of the party were responsible for the broad outlines of policy, but the detailed running of the economy was in the hands of a number of trusts and economic councils. At the factory level the director was supposed to be in sole charge of economic affairs, a principle known as *edinonachalie*, 'management by a single person'. The party was supposed to confine its activities to monitoring and exhortation. But in concrete instances the distinction between 'monitoring' and interference was blurred. The Central Committee issued a number of clarifications, but never adequately defined how the system was to operate. Even such guidelines as existed, moreover, were not always observed in practice.

This problem can be illustrated by the Central Committee's letter of 24 February 1924, 'On the closer participation of cells and factory trade union committees in the productive work of the enterprise'.<sup>2</sup> The party cell's work was circumscribed by the instruction that 'it cannot and must not substitute itself for the organs of trade union and managerial leadership'. But the letter's aim was to draw workers' attention to industrial questions, and to ensure maximum support for the drive for productivity. It envisaged that this could be achieved through wide discussions and consultation between management and workers at trade union and party meetings. The letter urged party cells to 'discuss the questions of the productive tasks of the enterprise, explaining from all aspects the reasons for its successful or unsuccessful activities'. Representatives of factory management were to report to the cell every two months on the progress of the enterprise, 'having first acquainted the cell through its bureau with the fundamental points of the report'. Trusts were to make similar reports once or twice a year in larger

factories. The letter required that conflicts should be resolved by the party, not management. All this necessitated a good knowledge of production and managerial practices on the cells' part. To ensure this, the Central Committee called on party representatives to familiarise themselves with production processes and the use of labour in their industry. It also required that representatives from party cells in particular fields of production should meet at fixed intervals to 'exchange experience' and discuss financial and production issues in detail. If it followed these instructions, no party cell could avoid economic questions. Whatever the wording of the letter, too, the pressure to intervene in the managerial sphere was built into the party's new role.

Another role for party involvement was the production meeting. Since wages could not be offered as incentives, and since anyway the party leadership regarded participation by the workforce in certain aspects of decision-making as desirable, the active support of workers for productivity campaigns was sought through the offer of open meetings with management. 'Production conferences' were one forum for this participation, although any general workers' meeting was empowered to raise production issues. Workers were encouraged to discuss reports from management and to suggest ways of raising the productivity and efficiency of the enterprise. The party cells played an active part in the organisation of such meetings, and were often required to adjudicate on specific proposals. 'All measures', insisted the Central Committee, 'being taken to raise the productivity of labour, must be broadly discussed at meetings of the cells, at production meetings and at broad meetings of workers'.<sup>3</sup>

There were several other party initiatives which brought management and cell into collision. The regime of economy, for example, introduced in 1926, created tensions between all branches of the factory administration. Conflicts between management and cell were not always the accidental results of official campaigns. For a party which was constantly wary of the 'bourgeois' director, pressure from the cells, and even from the workforce as a whole, was a useful tool. 'Self-criticism' (*samokritika*), which encouraged criticisms of the factory leadership from all quarters, was consciously intended as a tool for the containment of unsympathetic administrators, whether in factories or higher up in the state administration.<sup>4</sup>

Though 'bourgeois' directors were eventually controlled, however, and ultimately removed, the 'Red' directors' lack of authority relative to the party cell was a continuing problem. In 1929, in an effort to

remove the confusion and parallelism, the Central Committee issued a definition of *edinonachalie*.<sup>5</sup> The relationship between management and party was one of its concerns. As it noted, 'there is no clear and sufficiently strict delineation of functions and responsibilities between the factory organisations – between the director, the trade union committee and the party cell; at enterprises there are still cases where the party and trade union organs involve themselves directly in the operating-production work of the factory management'.<sup>6</sup> This situation not only hampered the director's freedom of movement, but also led to 'lack of responsibility', as no organ believed itself exclusively answerable for decisions on production issues. The resolution outlined the director's responsibilities, insisting that he was 'directly answerable for the fulfilment of the industrial-financial plan and all production tasks' and adding that only management should be responsible for appointments and transfers within the factory, although the party and trade union should also be consulted. Management was also responsible for labour discipline.

New definitions notwithstanding, however, other organs continued to have responsibilities which could bring them into conflict with the director. Workers would continue to be involved in the decision-making process through production conferences. Trade union and party organs would help to mobilise the work force. The party especially had a very narrow tightrope to walk. Its role was defined thus:

to implement the leadership of the social-political and economic life of the enterprise so as to ensure the fulfilment of fundamental party directives, without interfering in details of the work of the trade union committee and the director, especially in the operating instructions of the administration. The party cells must actively promote the fulfilment of the principle of *edinonachalie* in the whole system of industrial management.<sup>7</sup>

Historians are agreed that one of the purposes of this directive was to increase the responsibility and powers of the director, but at the time it left some factory officials in confusion, and further definitions, including characteristically terse statements by Stalin and M. M. Kaganovich, had to follow.<sup>8</sup> The demand for high output and the constant bottlenecks and crises in production ensured that the enterprise could not work effectively, and harassed directors constantly turned to other authorities, where the latter had not already invited themselves, to take a hand in production questions. Moreover, campaigns like socialist competition and 'shock work' (*udarnichestvo*) involved



workers and party, trade union and komsomol organisations in every aspect of life on the shop floor, from the setting of norms to the organisation of production and the allocation of wages.

Moscow was no exception in the confusion of the period. Like the Central Committee, the MK attempted to clarify the question of responsibility in the factory several times. In the mid-1920s Uglanov made a number of statements about the role of the party in Moscow industry which supported the formula of management by a single person. His remarks at the second MK plenum of January 1928 show that the MK was not united on the question of managerial power. 'The question, comrades', he explained, 'is clear, We must allow the director more independence and responsibility in the task assigned to him.... The director runs the factory and the party cell helps him to run it, helps him to organise the workers, to raise the productivity of labour'.<sup>9</sup> Uglanov went further: 'It often happens', he explained, 'that in our factories, the director is removed on a caprice of the party secretary. We should have kept the director, since the productivity of labour depends on him, and the growth of wages, and the lowering of costs.... We should remove the secretary, who knows nothing about the production process'.<sup>10</sup>

The 1929 Central Committee resolution on *edinonachalie* received wide publicity in Moscow, but so did the slogan 'face to production', and confusion about when the party should abstain from involvement in production problems continued. The difficulties were not confined to the factories themselves. Parallelism existed between the MK and the *raikoms* on one hand and the trusts and factory administrators on the other. The organisation of Moscow industry involved every tier of party and government from the Central Committee to the factory directors, foremen and party cell secretaries.

Moscow industry, like industry everywhere in the Soviet Union, was organised in a series of layers, according to the significance of the branch of industry and individual enterprise. The majority of factories were under the direct control of trusts, which in turn were attached to the all-Union, national, regional or Moscow Council for the Economy, or *sovnarkhoz*. Enterprises deemed to be of 'all-Union' significance were under the control of trusts responsible to VSNKh, the Supreme Council for the National Economy. In 1928 these included the Borets machine-building factory, answerable to Mashinotrest, the Armatura factory (*Armatrest*), AMO (*Avtotrest*) and Dinamo (GET, the State Electricity Trust).<sup>11</sup> In deciding which factories should be attached to VSNKh, size was also a crucial factor; smaller factories, even if they

produced strategically important goods, were subordinated to local *sovnarkhozy*.<sup>12</sup> The Moscow *Sovnarkhoz*, MSNKh, controlled industry of 'local significance', together with most textiles and other clothing, a sector which accounted for 75 per cent of the value of MSNKh's output in the 1920s. Other industries under its control were the production of spare parts, certain branches of the construction industry and the manufacturing section of the transport industry.<sup>13</sup> Below the level of MSNKh came co-operative ventures and concerns under the control of the local soviets, mainly food processing factories, including bakeries and sweet factories. Outside this structure altogether were the enterprises run by the OGPU, including certain printing and publishing works.<sup>14</sup>

The trusts and economic councils were not themselves independent of party control, although their interests, as economic bodies, were different from those of their political counterparts. Heads of trusts, from the early 1920s, were Bolshevik Party members, although their advisory staffs were unlikely to include many Communists. Moreover, trust heads, and the head of MSNKh, were members of the MK, and the MK buro also included several economic administrators at this level (see Appendix 1). There was thus provision for the economic organs within Moscow to make their needs known directly to the MK, and for reports to be made to the MK on their work. The trusts could anticipate positive as well as negative results from this political 'interference', as direct access to a senior party organ could bring rapid decisions in times of crisis.<sup>15</sup>

Within the enterprise there was a similar blurring between economic and political staff. Bolshevik theory, and also hard experience, indicated that the most dedicated supporter of the regime's economic goals would be a Communist director, 'bourgeois' specialists from the pre-revolutionary period being less amenable to the new methods and tempos required even in the 1920s. But Communists with the technical expertise to run a complex economic venture were few, and the result was a compromise, in which the titular head of the factory was the 'Red' director, but until 1929 the details of administration were in the hands of the 'technical' director, who was seldom a member of the Communist Party.<sup>16</sup> In the 1920s, indeed, despite positive promotion policies, the number of Communists in management remained small.<sup>17</sup>

While the number of technically qualified party members remained inadequate, alternative methods of ensuring a politically correct line in managerial matters were adopted by the party administration. Even Communist factory managers could not be expected always to act in

the general interest if this conflicted with the needs of their enterprise. Direct party involvement in industry was thus inevitable, even where the enterprise was in the hands of Communists who had themselves been appointed by the MK.

## THE ROLE OF THE PARTY IN PRACTICE

### **(a) The role of the Central and Moscow Committees in Moscow industry**

There was never a time, even during NEP, when overall responsibility for industrial growth did not lie with the party. Later, when rapid industrialisation was instituted as the result of a political decision, the party became the instigator of economic development, the driver whose foot on the accelerator, pressed firmly to the floor, determined the pace at which industrial growth should proceed. The MK had a duty to endorse and agitate for rapid development. This responsibility drew it into economic administration at the highest level. But it was also concerned with humbler matters. The MK took a close day-to-day interest in the work of the constituted economic administrators, an interest which often extended beyond supervision, although officially it was merely 'guidance'. And it initiated and led a number of specific campaigns, by-passing the normal channels of managerial authority.

The MK's work plans in this period provided for regular reports on different branches of industry (see Appendix 2). Although the dominance of economic questions in party discussions dated only from 1929, there was never a time when the MK considered details of the economy to be outside its responsibility. According to one Soviet historian, not a single meeting of the MK buro or plenum passed without discussing the economy between 1925 and 1928.<sup>18</sup> Typically these discussions produced resolutions designed to encourage *raikoms* or factory cells to take a more active part in current campaigns. For example, the MK called for more 'concrete' discussion of economic questions, the examination of detailed problems rather than generalities, and for party organs in the *raions* to acquaint themselves with the leading personnel in all branches of the administration of factories for which they were responsible.<sup>19</sup> Where the local cell had turned its 'face to production', the MK provided guidance, although it did not always support the factory cells in disputes with management.<sup>20</sup>

When it came to direct supervision, the MK had close links with the Moscow trusts, but it also intervened in individual enterprises on its

own account, circumventing the *raion* and factory party committees.<sup>21</sup> In 1927, for example, the MK set up an industrial commission, which examined 60 questions between 8 August and 2 September. Of these, 41 were ‘confirmations’ of directors or deputy directors. A further 10 questions examined concerned the personnel of Moscow trusts and MSNKh, and 5 more were on the checking of cadres at other levels.<sup>22</sup> Although it was usually the larger and more important enterprises which attracted the MK’s attention, especially those represented on the MK itself, smaller plants occasionally came up for discussion at MK meetings, particularly where there was an intractable problem of some kind, or egregious corruption on the part of the factory party committee or management.<sup>23</sup> Generally, the MK was one of several courts of last resort for the smaller factories, whereas for important plants it played a more regular supervisory role.<sup>24</sup>

Intervention by the MK was not confined to debates in its central offices. Formally and informally, members of the MK visited Moscow enterprises, sometimes spending time collecting information and supervising party and other administrative work. In January 1930, for example, a number of ‘brigades’ of the MK were delegated to work in 58 Moscow factories for the month of February, collecting information on the reasons for recent shortfalls in output and establishing ways of improving production. Among the heads of these brigades, although personally they might not be based at the factory throughout the period of the study, were I. M. Gordienko, chairman of the *oblast’* union of metalworkers and a member of the MK buro, to be stationed at Serp i Molot, E. S. Kogan, head of the *agitpropotdel* and also a buro member (Elektrozavod), Ryabov, buro member and the secretary of Zamoskvorech’e *raikom* (Krasnyi Proletarii), Volkov, buro member and head of MSNKh (AMO), and Trilisser, a senior OGPU official, who was to work in the troublesome Podol’sk machine tool factory.<sup>25</sup> Such brigades continued to be deployed by the MK in ‘problem’ factories. In 1931, for example, a brigade from the MK led by Ryndin worked at the Krasnyi Proletarii factory for several months. Its ruling on the reconstruction of the factory was final, and involved overturning the previous policy of the director.<sup>26</sup>

Just as the MK sometimes intervened in factories over the heads of its subordinate party organisations, so the Central Committee also took a hand in Moscow’s domestic affairs, on occasions reversing the decisions of Moscow trusts or the MK. The reconstruction of the Dinamo factory was one such case. In April 1929, the party cell there appealed to the Central Committee on the grounds that reconstruction

in the factory was being held up by the trust, GET. The Central Committee responded by setting up a commission of its own members and members of VSNKh of the USSR which found in favour of the Dinamo factory cell and against the trust.<sup>27</sup> Again in 1929, the Central Committee was asked by the director of AMO, Likhachev, to give a ruling on the reasons for the slow progress of reconstruction in the factory. Although the MK had earlier responded to a similar appeal by supporting Sorokin, the chairman of *Avtotrest*, who blamed the difficulties on the 'conservatism' of AMO workers, Ordzhonikidze, to whom Likhachev had appealed in person, finally agreed to the levels of investment requested by the director, thus finding against both the MK and the trust.<sup>28</sup>

This type of personal intervention was common in Moscow affairs. In a society where individual political figures had so much power, it was unavoidable that direct appeals would be made to influential national leaders, whatever protocol required. In 1930, for example, Apasov and Nikitin, two senior party officials at Elektrozavod, wrote personally to Krzhizhanovskii, who was an 'honorary shock worker' at the factory, requesting help with raw materials supplies, shortages of specialised glass and imported alloys having caused a drop in output in the lamp department.<sup>29</sup> At the time of the reconstruction of Serp i Molot, Kaganovich, newly-appointed to the first secretaryship of the MK, took a personal interest in the factory, and used his influence to get the question of its future settled at the highest level. In 1931, at his instigation, a distinguished group, including Voroshilov, Ordzhonikidze, Mikoyan, Mezhlauk and Gurevich paddled around in the mud of the factory site 'investigating' the reconstruction project.<sup>30</sup> This appeal to the highest level, rather than to the MK, reflected the popular, and probably correct, perception of the distribution of power between the centre and the regional committee.

Despite the personal and institutional intervention of the Central Committee, however, economic problems proliferated in the capital. Several times in this period, campaigns were launched to overcome these through the combined efforts of party, local soviets, control commissions, workers and management. Among these were the regime of economy in 1926, the 'rationalisation of industry' campaign of 1927, and the drive for factories to balance their budgets, *khozraschet*, in 1931. The MK acted as the centre's local executor in these campaigns, but within broad guidelines, it had responsibility for the details of their implementation, organising publicity for them, hearing reports on their progress, and attempting to make improvements where they failed.

Although launched on the party's initiative, campaigns of this type were not exclusively run by its members. The regime of economy, for example, was the joint responsibility of the soviet, trade union, co-operative and other mass organisations.<sup>31</sup> Because of this wide involvement, it was susceptible to modification in the enterprise. In fact it often ended up being controlled by managers anxious to protect their own position at the expense of workers' wage packets.<sup>32</sup> Where interests competed like this within the framework of official campaigns, it was crucially important to mobilise the grassroots party membership. The problems this raised will be discussed below.

The other type of campaign through which the MK influenced economic life was the drive against 'bureaucratism' or 'corruption'. As Bauman explained in 1927, on the eve of one such campaign, 'it is unquestionable that soviet democracy has developed in depth and in breadth. But, despite the great growth of the *aktiv*, the work of the state, economic and co-operative apparatuses continues to be very tenuously linked with the masses'.<sup>33</sup> The 1927 anti-bureaucratism campaign in Moscow was followed in 1929–30 by a full-scale purge of the state and economic apparatuses supervised by the MK and MKK. In August 1929, the MK ordered the mobilisation of 150 people, including its own members and members of the MKK and *gubispolkom*, 'but especially members of the Communist Party with specialist experience', to review the progress of the purge and to ensure more thorough work by the local commissions.<sup>34</sup> In the course of the campaign, major reductions were made in the size of the apparatuses affected, while new promotees, often ex-workers, took up bureaucratic jobs vacated by 'corrupt' or 'bureaucratised elements'.<sup>35</sup> Political interference in the appointment of cadres for administrative work was a persistent feature of the first Five Year Plan, and affected economic administration at all levels.<sup>36</sup> The MK remained a powerful force in Moscow's economic life.

### **(b) The role of the *raikoms***

The *raikoms* initially played a direct part in the life of Moscow factories. Until 1929 factory party organisations were not independent party units with all statutory rights, but were classified as 'cells', major decisions being left to the *raikom*. Although some factory party cells acquired the status of full primary organs, with their own committees and full-time staff, smaller factories retained the less privileged cells. The *raikoms*' responsibilities included supervision of party life in the factory,

together with a direct involvement in the strictly economic aspects of factory administration. Even after the creation of full factory committees, the *raikoms* still had overall responsibility for economic and political affairs within their boundaries.

Plenary sessions of the *raikoms* discussed a wide range of topics, including economic, social, cultural and political affairs in the *raion*, but most of the *raikom* buro's time was taken up with the discussion of reports from enterprises, many of them concerned with the managerial aspects of factory administration.<sup>37</sup> A report of 1928 outlined the main tasks of the *raikom* in this area. They included daily contact with factory cells, investigations of individual enterprises and the study of specific questions of practical work, the selection and deployment of promotees and regular meetings with all cell secretaries and activists in each branch of industry.<sup>38</sup>

The extent of their involvement was considerable, and could include intervention even at the level of the trust. In 1930, for example, a report by the head of the precision engineering trust, Tochmech, showed that relations between some of its factories, especially Geofizika, Aviapribor and Memza, had become strained over the past two years as a result of problems with raw materials and technical change. This strain had led to a general shortfall in the group's plan fulfilment. As a result of the report, the Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* was instructed to intervene in the running of the trust, to try to establish better relations between the directors of the factories concerned and to 'liquidate the hold-up (*proryv*) in production of the previous quarter'.<sup>39</sup> To a large extent, a *raikom*'s success would be judged on this kind of work. In 1928, for example, a report on Khamovniki *raikom* found that its work in this field, including its record on enforcing party directives on the economy at the factory level and its liaison with lower cells, was unsatisfactory. The report urged that the *raikom* be 'put in order' by a team of half a dozen responsible workers from the MK *orgraspredotdel*.<sup>40</sup> In 1930, similar criticisms were levelled at the Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*, this time resulting in the removal of its secretary, Ryabov.<sup>41</sup>

### **(c) The role of the factory party organisation and its subsidiaries**

The party leadership devoted a good deal of its time to elaborating instructions for members at the lowest levels. But however carefully it considered the problems they were likely to face, there was always contingencies which it could not foresee. Moreover, it was often easier for the leadership to leave difficult areas vague, so that responsibility

for the unpopular details of implementation would lie with the activists. Accordingly, it was in the factories themselves that the details of economic life were actually determined. From 1928 until the first half of 1930 this work was generally undertaken with enthusiasm. Even workers who were not party members seemed willing to make sacrifices to improve production.<sup>42</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, ‘concrete’ work was more congenial to most activists than discussion. After 1930 problems surfaced, especially as it became apparent that material benefits for the mass of ordinary people might be a long time coming. At the same time, the leadership began to count the cost of activists’ creativity – initiatives taken in good faith but damaging to overall growth – and by 1931 the pattern of administration in Moscow’s factories began to change.

Officially, three main organisations were responsible for administrative questions within the factory; the party cell, the trade union committee and the management, with mass meetings of workers, production conferences and commissions, adding suggestions from the shop floor (see Figure 8.1). Each of these, as outlined above, had specific responsibilities, although the precise boundaries between them were uncertain. Of the three organisations, consistently the weakest was the trade union. Party control of the trade unions at this level, especially after the defeat of the Rightist trade union chairman, Tomskii, was strict. As with the local soviets, the party ‘fraction’ of the *zavkom*, the trade union committee in the factory, reporting to the party cell, provided the real leadership in trade union affairs.<sup>43</sup> Even elections to the *zavkoms* were supervised by party brigades from the *raikoms*.<sup>44</sup> Filatov, the secretary of the Serp i Molot party cell, remarked that the *zavkom* there was so ineffective that ambitious non-party workers who joined it generally left within two months in order to join the party instead.<sup>45</sup>

The responsibilities of the other two corners of the ‘triangle’, the cell and the director, are still the subject of controversy among students of the period. General definitions are hard to sustain because of the importance of local factors, including the relative vigour of the two organisations in specific instances. Central directives were confused and contradictory. In the mid-1920s, the party leadership’s main fear was that the cells were not discussing economic matters with sufficient frequency or confidence. By 1932 the problem, from the centre’s point of view, was that the cells were overruling the director too often. This varying emphasis reflected high-level policy shifts as well as genuine changes in the situation in the factories.



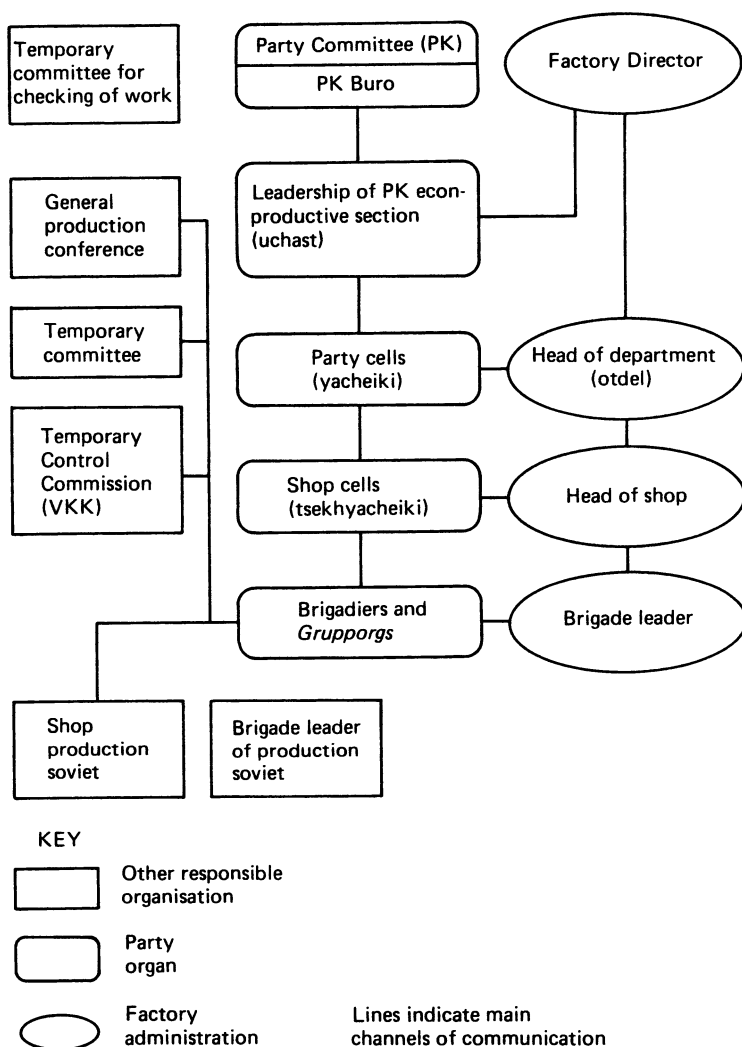


Figure 8.1 Economic administration in Elektroavtomat in 1930

'The party' in the factory did not speak with a single voice. Among the distinctions which gave rise to different tendencies among Communists, generation, 'links with the countryside' and position within the factory were important. The individual's status in the party also contributed to his or her outlook. There was a world of difference between the committed young activist and the reluctant recruit,

for whom economic work, like any other party *nagruzka*, was a burden to be resented, if not shirked. Other distinctions depended on the individual's job in the factory. Communists in management preserved a 'manager's' outlook distinct from that adopted by their counterparts in the *zavkom* or party cell administration. Attempts to subordinate all Communists to party discipline, regardless of the organisation in which they worked, largely failed. Broadly, too, there was a distinction between full-time party staff and the rank and file. Official pronouncements on the party in the factory often ignored these differences.

In the 1920s many factories lacked full-time party officials, while others had only officials and no mass base on the shop floor.<sup>46</sup> In factories without full-time staff, rank and file members, often including those who were temporarily given responsible posts, tended to have the same outlook as their fellow-workers. The widespread disillusionment caused by low wages and unemployment affected these party members no less than other workers, and incidents where members of the party cell, as well as the *zavkom*, 'misunderstood' their role in the factory and led workers' protest movements, including strikes, occasionally reached the party press.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, full-time party members, career politicians appointed by the MK, often sympathised more with the factory administration than with their own rank and file. The same was occasionally true of cell secretaries from the bench who 'grew in office' even if their appointment was only temporary, incurring the criticism from their fellow-Communists that they had turned their back on the 'mass'. The party's conduct of the regime of economy in the factories illustrates these divisions in practice. In general party cells neglected the work required of them during the campaign. Savvat'ev reported that on average less than a quarter of Communists in the Moscow factories studied in 1926 had attended the general meetings where the issue had been discussed.<sup>48</sup> On the other hand, all branches of the administration in some factories were guilty of 'misinterpreting' the campaign, and making economies along the line of least resistance, by cutting workers' wages, raising norms, and reducing the size of the workforce.<sup>49</sup>

Confusion also arose between rank and file party members' two roles as 'model producers' and as part-time administrators. This can be illustrated by the example of production meetings, a persistent source of concern from the 1920s onwards. First introduced in 1921 and made general in 1924, production meetings were supposed to be forums at which workers could propose ways of improving the production process, ranging from alterations in their own machinery to major reforms within

the enterprise or branch of industry.<sup>50</sup> Attendance by Communists was regarded as valuable for two reasons. On one hand, they were required to set an example, to attend and to propose suitable measures themselves, while on the other, they were expected to use these meetings as a means of mobilising the workforce from above. In July 1927, for example, the MK buro noted that not enough work had been done through the production meetings 'to prepare the general mood of the workers' for the rationalisation of industry campaign.<sup>51</sup> Production meetings were expected to yield more than just suggestions from workers. MK reports on the meetings repeatedly condemned the local cells' failure both to encourage workers' enthusiasm and to mobilise mass support.

Figures provided by MGSPS indicate that attendance by Communists at production meetings was not as low as the MK suggested, however, especially in industries where the party 'layer' was substantial.<sup>52</sup> The failure of production meetings was not merely caused by weak attendance, or even lack of zeal, but by confusion about their purpose, and a certain amount of reluctance on the side of both management and party leadership to implement the suggestions raised. On average, only about a third of workers' suggestions got any further than the foreman's desk. Sometimes this was because of a lack of resources to implement them,<sup>53</sup> otherwise it was because the suggestions themselves were unworkable. Roughly a quarter of suggestions concerned 'improvements' to individual machines. Some of these were implemented successfully, but others, if introduced, would have made production so complicated that only the worker who had designed the improvement could ever have operated the machine.<sup>54</sup>

The low level of implementation led to cynicism about the meetings, and attendance by ordinary workers was at best sporadic. All kinds of mass meetings in the factories were liable to boycott by disillusioned workers, who rightly perceived that their contribution might be meaningless, except as an addition to the record of 'activism'. Party activists and officials, anxious to show high turn-out figures at their workplaces, often devised unorthodox tactics of their own to improve the situation. Inducements like scarce and attractive food might be offered at the end of meetings. If the carrot failed, then party officials might resort to compulsion, as in the case of a mine in the Moscow *oblast*, where meetings were held at the bottom of the shaft at the end of shifts, thus obliging workers to attend.<sup>55</sup> When official policy was particularly unpopular, attendance by every kind of worker, including rank and file Communists, plummeted. In 1929, for example, enthusiasm

for party work was so low that election meetings in AMO, Serp i Molot and other factories, including a printworks, could not even attract quorums.<sup>56</sup>

The problems raised by the tension between party, mass and management could be smoothed over in the 1920s, when party cells could avoid production issues by concentrating on mass work, recruitment and intra-party affairs. Economic questions were part of the agenda of local cells in the 1920s, but it was not until 1928 that the details of economic management began to dominate the meetings of local cells, as they also did those of *raikoms* and the MK itself. Conflicting criticisms were made of the local cells in the party press during the first Five Year Plan. On one hand, they continued to be accused of taking too little interest in economic matters, while on the other, to an increasing extent, they were reprimanded for their breaches of *edinonachalie*. These contradictory criticisms reflect the leadership's own incoherence. It was not until well into 1931 that a consistent picture of the cells' role began to appear in official speeches.

There is no doubt that factory party cells were grossly overburdened with duties of all kinds, and also that members often lacked the training, time or motivation to fulfil them adequately. As a result production questions were still often neglected. In 1928 the Dinamo party cell discussed economic issues once at a total of 13 meetings over an eight-month period.<sup>57</sup> In Serp i Molot in the economic year 1927/28, 194 separate questions were discussed by the party cell, only 4 of which concerned the economy.<sup>58</sup> Among the other pressing duties of the party cells, the purge of 1929 and the campaign of mass-recruitment were particularly important at this time. Moreover, most cell secretaries, full-time or voluntary, had inadequate training in economic matters. This was especially a problem for full-time officials brought in from outside the industry concerned. A survey carried out in January 1930 covering 20 major factories, including AMO, Dinamo and Trekhgornaya Manufaktura, found that of 80 leading figures in the factory party committees, almost none had any technical training. More investigations in April showed that 27 per cent of party secretaries in Moscow's metal industry had no working experience of the industry at all.<sup>59</sup>

Lack of time, training or enthusiasm could easily bring the factory party organisations into disrepute among the workforce. A study conducted by the metalworkers' union in 1930 concluded that low attendance rates at planning meetings by party members suggested to workers that 'the approach of the administration to the establishment

of control figures is not serious'.<sup>60</sup> 'Our meetings', noted a party member from the Tsindel' factory, 'often lack a businesslike quality'.<sup>61</sup> Rank and file Communists also failed to set a good example in many cases. When party members themselves did not turn up for *subbotniki*, ordinary workers could not be blamed for 'absenteeism' at these 'voluntary' sessions.<sup>62</sup>

After 1929, however, excessive tampering in the affairs of management began to be seen as more serious than the laxity described above. While resolutions urging Communists to take an active part in socialist competition and shock work streamed from the press,<sup>63</sup> more emphasis was laid, especially after September 1929, on the director's formal economic leadership. Among the reasons for this was the proven effect of party intervention. Far from improving production and industrial relations within the factory, the party often appeared to make matters worse. Despite the resolution on *edinonachalie*, however, and the growing concern about party interference in management, effective reforms to curb party intervention were slow to appear. For the bulk of the first Five Year Plan confusion about who should be in charge led to contradictory directives in the press, tensions in the factory and indecision among managers.

Clear signals to the cells that they should be active in economic affairs continued to drown the calls for demarcation of responsibilities in the factory. These included the Shakhty trial, the purge of the apparatus and the campaigns to promote workers into administration. After 1928 the size of the factory party organisations, structural reform of the factory party and the increased burdens imposed on all branches of the factory administration by the tempo of industrialisation led to greater party involvement in all aspects of factory life, especially economic administration. Cell buros' responsibility to the *raion* and other senior party organs included a regular report on the economic affairs of the enterprise, for the purpose of which they were held responsible for many of the economic problems, or achievements, which occurred. Moreover, regular directives from above demanded that they take an interest in the details of economic administration. 'Our work', said one directive, 'is composed of the minute details of life'.<sup>64</sup> Party members, even only in their capacity as Communists, were urged to study productive processes and to examine every detail systematically with the director.<sup>65</sup>

More often than not, these 'minute details' did not dampen their enthusiasm and commitment. Indeed involvement in the details of production came easily to people whose evenings were often devoted

to the study of engineering, technology and management. Within the party membership of most factories, a group was emerging by 1928 that took industry seriously. In the next few years, such people would be prime candidates for technical education and promotion, but while they remained on the site, their skills and enthusiasm were available to the cell.<sup>66</sup> Their dedication is immediately striking from the records of cell buro meetings. It was only later that the cost of their involvement, in terms of administrative confusion, began to be counted. From 1928 through to 1930, the cells' contribution was valued, especially when many directors were regarded with suspicion.

A recurrent criticism of directors was that they harboured 'oppositionist attitudes' towards the tempo of industrialisation. This was to some extent a self-fulfilling prophecy. Even directors who did not oppose current policy feared the possibility of unpredictable condemnation and were thus reluctant to take decisive action. An example from the Duks factory was used to illustrate the problem to delegates at the September 1928 plenum of the MK. The director there wanted to increase the allowance of soap in the factory washrooms by 50 grammes, at a cost of two kopeks, but before doing so, telephoned the trust to make sure it was permissible. The phone calls and other communications between the trust and the director ended up incurring costs of about thirty roubles. A cynical voice from the floor interrupted at this point, commenting that 'the trust no doubt set up a commission to look into it'.<sup>67</sup> The economic organs did not have a reputation for taking quick decisions.

Waverers apart, there were certainly directors who genuinely opposed the more ambitious aspects of central planning. As they were aware, political, not economic, imperatives, were forcing the pace during the first Five Year Plan. But resistance could cost the director his job. This was the case in Krasnyi Proletarii, for example, where two directors in succession, Prokhorov and Stepanov, resisted optimal plans for the reconstruction of the factory and were eventually replaced. Faliks, the secretary of the cell in 1928/29, later gave his account of its role. It consisted, he said, 'of the party itself leading the struggle for the fastest possible reconstruction of the factory. The cell itself took an active part in seeing that the first diesel shop should be completed, the construction of which had begun in 1914'.<sup>68</sup> Gaidul', the secretary of the Serp i Molot committee in 1929, listed eight functions for the factory committee in the economic field, including the introduction of a twelve-month working year and seven-day week, the drawing up of control figures for the factory on a monthly, six-monthly and yearly

basis, rationalisation plans, and a number of detailed questions of administration.<sup>69</sup>

Details of the work of the party committees from both factories indicate how far, on their own initiative, they had become involved in management by 1929. In that year, production at Krasnyi Proletarii, and also at the nearby Vladimir Il'ich factory, was seriously hampered by the demolition of the factories' foundries, a political decision aimed at 'rationalising' production by paving the way for a shared, purpose-built foundry in the area. The affair, the centre of a long scandal, contributed to the downfall of the technical director of the trust, Satel', and the director of the factory, Stepanov, both of whom were later implicated in the 'Industrial Party'. Neither Stepanov nor his successor, Mozgov, enjoyed the wholehearted confidence of the party cell buro. As one report later put it, 'two corners of the triangle have burned up, one remains – the cell, and therefore the cell has had to take on part of the work' of the other two.<sup>70</sup> The cell buro's discussions in 1929 were thus dominated by economic affairs. At the time of Mozgov's appointment, it held a detailed discussion of his tasks, debating technical issues as if their resolution rested primarily with the cell.<sup>71</sup> Other appointments were discussed throughout the year, the cell showing a clear independence in all matters affecting factory life.

To see this as a simple confrontation between the director and the cell would be a mistake, however. The terms in which *edinonachalie* was to be discussed in September concealed a more complex reality than the simple 'triangle' image suggests. Where there were disputes at Krasnyi Proletarii, it was not always the case that the cell buro as a whole was aligned against the director. The buro itself was divided and its members were individuals who did not always group the same way on every question. Moreover, members of the buro could side with the director rather than with their party comrades. This was particularly true of Faliks, the cell secretary.

Faliks had risen from the ranks of the factory party organisation, and was regarded very much as a comrade by the other members of the cell, but as secretary, he identified with the management on several occasions. In January and February, the cell buro devoted two meetings to the appointment of a head for the mechanical shop. Although Men'shikov, clearly a 'bourgeois specialist', had been appointed to the post the previous year, the recent Moscow Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate resolution on specialists, in connection with the anti-Right campaign, cast doubts on his suitability. In particular, the director and the factory cell secretary were alarmed about the possibility of future

criticism, and proposed that he be withdrawn. Men'shikov himself declared that he 'had never wanted the job anyway'. The buro discussed the matter, at first supporting Faliks and Stepanov.

It was a speech by Babaev which swung the discussion the other way. He declared that 'this is the first buro which has given way on every question; now we have to kneel in front of the manager, so that he will fulfil the party's resolution'. After that, other speakers weighed in against the director and cell secretary, with the result that Men'shikov was eventually appointed as planned.<sup>72</sup> At the next buro meeting Stepanov and Faliks again raised the question of Men'shikov, but the cell refused to consider the alternative candidate, Ganrio. Men'shikov remained in his post, despite flurries of criticism, concerted by Faliks, that he was disliked by the other specialists in his shop.

The files from Krasnyi Proletarii illustrate how divided the party was at all levels. The chain of command, far from connecting the tiers of the hierarchy in an orderly fashion, appears to have been broken or twisted in many places. Everywhere people were having to take initiatives in order to solve problems on which there were no official guidelines. To avoid punishment for the inevitable mistakes, they often had to conceal what they were doing from colleagues and superiors. The cell buro at Krasnyi Proletarii, for example, systematically attempted to deceive the *raikom* about its performance in September 1929. It also defended its interests against *raikom* intervention. An attempt in August by the *raikom* to remove the recently-appointed cell buro secretary, Kulikov, on the grounds of his inexperience, failed. The cell showed no fear of expressing its views, even if Ryabov, the *raikom* secretary, was present. When the *raikom* met at Krasnyi Proletarii to discuss the factory's poor record, cell buro members criticised their party superiors for disrupting their work as well as taking criticism from above. 'If you will take ten people from us every month', remarked one buro member, 'we can't really be expected to develop an *aktiv*'.<sup>73</sup>

The lower levels in the party hierarchy showed a similar attitude towards the cell buro. In its turn, the cell buro treated them no better, concealing its work from them or over-ruling them for the sake of convenience. Official communications between the layers were stilted and often misleading. For example, the September 1929 open meeting of the Krasnyi Proletarii buro, attended by the *aktiv*, came to conclusions about the state of party work in the factory quite different from those of the closed meeting which immediately followed it. The buro's regular report, which also appeared in September, used bland phrases such as 'satisfactory' to describe the work of the *zavkom* and



production meetings, although closed sessions of the buro had recently condemned them, and passed urgent resolutions calling for reform. Misleading or euphemistic reports like this were seldom investigated by the senior party organs.<sup>74</sup> The latter understood that too much was expected of the local cells, and that investigations would reveal shortcomings to which no-one had a solution. Despite central admonitions on 'concrete' reporting, most local officials were happy with a *modus vivendi* which enabled them collectively to ignore intractable problems.

In general the lower party activists showed that they were not easily manipulated by the factory party buro. Their interests were wide-ranging, and not always confined to the orderly discussion of economic issues. In this sense, they were an imperfect organ for transmitting central labour and industrial policy to the broad ranks of the working class. While the factory committee was obliged, for practical reasons, to discuss management questions as a matter of urgency, the lower cells, lacking the ultimate responsibility for the factory's success or failure, pressed their superiors on political issues such as the defeat of the Right and the expulsion of Trotsky. At a meeting at Krasnyi Proletarii held to discuss the resolutions of the sixteenth Party Conference, for example, all but one of the questions from the *aktiv* were concerned with high politics, and the approach of the questioners was critical of the leadership. The banishment of Trotsky in particular drew hostile comment, workers feeling that from abroad, 'Mister Trotsky' could do more harm to the Soviet Union than he might have done in Alma-Ata.<sup>75</sup> When economic policy was discussed, it was to express scepticism about the wisdom of the latest directives.<sup>76</sup>

Krasnyi Proletarii's problems were regarded as particularly acute in 1929, but they were by no means unique. Complaints about cell secretaries' 'bureaucratism', directors' 'opportunism', the lack of communication between the layers in the factory party organisation, and about buros which 'substituted themselves' for the lower party organs, were common in the press of the period. At the lowest levels, in the shifts and brigades, the multiplicity of organisations, even within the party structure alone, led to a situation in which nobody knew who was responsible for implementing policy, a problem which commonly led to paralysis. Collecting membership dues on time was too much for many *grupporgs*, when it came to the details of economic life their interventions were often sporadic, clumsy and disruptive.<sup>77</sup> The party leadership repeatedly instructed organisations in the shifts and brigades to distinguish between their tasks and the details which were outside

their responsibility, but even these instructions were confusing and contradictory.

At Krasnyi Proletarii all these problems led to chaos in 1930 and the first few months of 1931, although here again the factory was not an exception. In these years, factory administrations everywhere were liable to crisis, as directors feared to take responsibility and party organisations lacked the coherence or the technical expertise to substitute for them adequately. The mass of workers were becoming disillusioned; strikes in Moscow factories signalled impending disaster.<sup>78</sup> The factory party activists were beleaguered, caught between an impatient workforce whose material discomforts they largely shared, and an exacting party leadership whose demands showed no sign of relaxing in the face of the economic crisis. Direct intervention from outside, either by party officials or by the OGPU, was the increasingly frequent resort.<sup>79</sup> The struggle was not only about who should take decisions in the factory, but covered such matters as the pace of change and the methods to be used in plan fulfilment. Setting the factories on the 'correct' path, in 1930–1 terms, involved eradicating opposition to high plan targets, socialist competition and new work norms. Within factories there were confrontations between generations (old specialists versus the new generation from the VTUZY), between layers in the party hierarchy, between party and workers and party and management. The tactics used by Communist officials, assisted at times by the OGPU, involved the creation of a new demonology of 'enemies'. Once again, politics took over in the administration of the enterprise.

The struggle at Krasnyi Proletarii was bitter. Accounts of the cell buro's meetings for 1930 and the first part of 1931 are written in pencil on a few scraps of paper, a sharp contrast to the orderly typescript records of 1929. Faliks later recalled the difficulties of the period, but his account has been carefully cut out of the archival record with scissors or a razor blade.<sup>80</sup> All that remains are his recollections of meetings which went on into the small hours, sometimes until four in the morning, where the difficulties were hotly debated, more than once in the presence of the OGPU. At Serp i Molot, the account of 'enemies' shows how crude the campaign could be. Here again, Satel', and another representative of Mashinotrest, List, were among the highly-placed 'enemies' removed in the autumn of 1929. The factory's own chief engineer, Mattis, was another. Their well-grounded doubts about the chances of reconstructing the original Serp i Molot rather than building on a more suitable site<sup>81</sup> were one of the main reasons for their disgrace at the factory.<sup>82</sup> After their defeat, resistance to the reconstruction plan could always be branded as 'wrecking', and the campaign to eradicate

opposition, waste and idleness continued at a high pitch. 'Our enemies' tails', said a 1930 article in the factory newspaper, *Martenovka*, 'are being concealed under a workers' blouse'.<sup>83</sup>

If it followed the instructions of the leadership after 1930, the party cell would have been concentrating more on instilling discipline and setting examples, and less on supervising the director's work. But cells did not always see their work so simply. 1930 and 1931 were years when 'mass' projects run by party and komsomol activists were as disruptive as former breaches in *edinonachalie*. Campaigns like socialist competition on one hand, and the drive for optimal planning on the other, with its concomitant, the removal of people who doubted the feasibility of high targets, continued to ensure that if the earth trembled before anyone in the factory in the period before 1932, it was the party secretary, if not the GPU officer, rather than the director. Even on the shop floor, party members could interfere with such matters as the nomination of 'shock' workers, despite the fact that this was strictly a managerial matter. Both rank and file party members and their leaders succeeded in alienating large sections of the technical staff as a result. Balashov, a member of the Krasnyi Proletarii cell buro remarked in September 1929 that factory staff there in general disliked working with Communists.<sup>84</sup> The problem was not solved by the belated holding of conferences to draw technical personnel into political life.<sup>85</sup>

The party's involvement in industry in the years 1930-1 cannot be seen as an aberration by the lower ranks. Despite the resolution on *edinonachalie*, the centre's policies on party structure and on recruitment in these years indicated its strong desire to involve the masses in production and to politicise them as far as possible. The need to do so was obvious. Without the support and sacrifice of the mass of workers, the production leaps of the period would have been impossible. From the late summer of 1929 until late in 1930, as the hardships of the 'second revolution' drowned the flush of early enthusiasm, worker resistance, including organised protest, was a worrying problem. It is likely that without the party to cajole and coerce the mass, and also to supervise reluctant directors, rapid industrialisation would have been impossible. But party activists, especially those recruited hastily after 1929, were not above joining their non-party colleagues to protest about their grievances. Even the party cell came to be seen by the leadership as a risky instrument for mobilising the workforce. In 1931 moves to circumvent the activists began to take shape.

Hierarchy and discipline were increasingly stressed. Policy shifts included the differentiation of wages, the renewed recruitment of specialists into the party, and encouragement to the director, now almost

certainly a party member, to shoulder responsibilities on his own.<sup>86</sup> The other side of this coin was a retreat from the 'proletarian' policies of the previous three years. Recruitment came to an end in 1933. The shift cell and its subsidiaries disappeared, replaced from 1932 by more streamlined, professionally-run shop and factory party committees.<sup>87</sup> In his speech proposing the change, made at an MGK plenum in May 1932, Kaganovich placed particular emphasis on the need for responsibilities within the factory to be clearly defined.<sup>88</sup>

After three years of sporadic but deepening economic crisis, the need to improve the efficiency of administration was manifest. But improved efficiency, although a result of the reform, was not its only purpose. Filatov, writing about the reorganisation in Serp i Molot, explained that the change ensured that there would be strong leaders for every cell and that leadership henceforward would be 'concrete'.<sup>89</sup> Party work was now to be more disciplined and predictable. By 1932, the emphasis of party work in the factories was on the full-time, 'responsible' staff, and their fellow-Communist, the director. The important shift in the party's involvement was not that it was reduced, for high-level involvement probably increased, but that it no longer involved the mass of the rank and file. The party presence in the factories now principally took the form of intervention by the Central Committee, MK and *raikoms*. The role of the factory level party organisation changed, reducing the amount of initiative and power in untried hands. As one historian put it, 'the Party cell ... would end up, in fact, as the manager's supportive lobby, his *tolkach*, thus losing its leading position in the factory when at the same time the Party's higher authorities were strengthening their own grip on affairs nationally'.<sup>90</sup>

Another effect of the changes of 1931–2 was to strengthen the position of the director and the technical side of management. This was not the same as returning to the pre-Shakhty status quo, however. The party cells' involvement in economic decision-making raised problems of both discipline and economic efficiency, and was thus in many senses a failure, but the period between 1928 and 1931 was important for the Bolsheviks in that it saw a decisive reduction in the power of the old-style 'bourgeois' specialist. And although the cell itself was no longer to interfere regularly in production, Communist activists, now hurriedly completing their vocational studies, would increasingly participate in middle management as specialists and technicians. The retreat from the policies of 'cultural revolution' was possible because in many respects they had succeeded.

It would be excessively teleological to argue that the power of the party rank and file had been invoked in this period temporarily and

for that end only. There is no reason to suppose that the political leadership foresaw in 1928 that they would soon have to reverse the 'mass' policies of the first Five Year Plan. Their hope that a broadly-based party could solve the problem of mass working class mobilisation was briefly justified by the enthusiasm for the economic drive in 1929.<sup>91</sup> By 1932, however, the idea was almost entirely abandoned. The elaborate system had failed to work to the leadership's satisfaction. The reform of 1932 reduced the possibilities for confusion, concentrating responsibility in fewer and more trusted hands. As Kaganovich implied, if the Moscow Party could not carry out all the tasks expected of it without costly mistakes, then reform on a national basis was almost certainly required. Not even in the Stakhanovite period was the power of the factory party cell relative to the director again to be so great.

Who was to blame for the failure of the mass party experiment? Responsibility for the shortcomings of factory administration really lay with the central authorities. The goals of the First Five Year Plan put a strain on all levels of the party. The centre, itself unable to cope, increasingly passed the burden down to the regional and local organisations. It relied on their initiatives. Sometimes its dissatisfaction with the cells arose from a fear that they were developing excessive autonomy, rather than that they were incompetent. At other times, it decided that the *aktiv* were incapable of meeting all the demands laid on them. The latter should not be blamed in either case. Often, admittedly, activists lacked training, energy, time or skills. But even if they had been endowed with all these things, they could never have carried out all that was expected of them. Significantly, the tightening of central control in 1931–2 was accompanied by a retreat from the most ambitious planning targets.

## 9 Political Participation and Party Democracy

The preceding chapters have shown that rank and filers in the Communist Party had a certain amount of influence over local affairs. The official line was not always clear, leaving room for local adjustments, initiatives and amendments. Such initiatives could influence central policy, and certainly determined the extent to which it was effective in a range of areas from industrial management to education. But the autonomous activity of the rank and file could be curbed by the leadership, and decisions were frequently taken by the elite without consultation of any kind. The full-time party officials, and above them the elite – members of party committees at the *guberniya* and national levels – had the ultimate power. Traditional accounts of the Soviet political process have tended to leave the matter there, as if ‘the leadership’ were a settled and immutable entity, separate from (and usually more or less antagonistic to) the mass from the early 1920s onwards. On the other hand, the work of recent revisionists has suggested that the elite was influenced by pressure ‘from below’ at several crucial junctures.

In an earlier chapter, I suggested that in Moscow at least, the elite and the rank and file inhabited separate cultural worlds by 1925, although their interests intersected briefly at the time of the ‘Great Turn’ in 1928–9. Having examined the party’s activities at both elite and grassroots level, it is now time to test this thesis more thoroughly by looking at the patterns of formal political participation in the emergent Stalinist system. Soviet scholars have argued that even participation in social activity amounts to political involvement.<sup>1</sup> But political scientists in the West prefer to focus on two issues: recruitment into the political elite and the degree to which that elite is susceptible to influence from below.<sup>2</sup> The first type of participation can be examined by looking at the composition of the elite, its accessibility to rank and filers and the principles by which promotions were made. The second involves looking at the degree to which the elite could be influenced by pressure from below, either through the party network or through channels like production meetings, control commissions and ‘self-criticism’.

The Soviet political elite comprised officials in both the party and the state hierarchies. The party's directing role in Soviet life created a situation in which even economic appointments were considered 'political'. Ultimately, indeed, promotions in both state and party organisations were controlled by party *orgaspredotdely*. There were superficial differences between the two bureaucracies, but this overlap, along with other pressures, tended to ensure that in essence they worked to the same rules. The party apparatus was 'closed', for example, recruiting only Communists, while the state and economic apparatuses had inherited a significant number of non-party officials trained before 1917.<sup>3</sup> But all official departments were criticised for '*chinovnichestvo*'<sup>4</sup> – practices worthy of Gogol's pen. Party officials deployed in state posts frequently adopted the 'bureaucratic' approach they had been appointed to eradicate.<sup>5</sup> *Raikoms* and factory committees were as frequently accused of 'bureaucratism' as state organs staffed by non-Communists. And in all apparatuses there was a conflict of priority between the official aim of promoting 'proletarian' cadres, presumed to be free from bureaucratic attitudes, and the need for skilled administrators, whether technicians or managerial staff. Doubts about the latter's political soundness had always to be weighed against the desirability of their cooperation in the short term. Before 1928 the shortage of specialists and the need for their skills ensured that political considerations would not threaten their tenure of office.<sup>6</sup> Even during the 'cultural revolution', when criticism of specialists was at its most severe, change was hindered by the need for skilled cadres.

The fundamental feature which all branches of the apparatus shared was the system of appointments to key posts. Above a certain level appointments to both state and party posts were controlled by *nomenklatura*. It was a system which limited the number of people eligible for promotion across the board. The barrier between the *apparatchiki* and the mass was not insuperable. As we shall see, it was possible for rank and file party members to gain access to elite positions if they satisfied the criteria of loyalty, energy and class origin. But the *nomenklatura* system regulated access to influential posts, ruling out spontaneity in the promotion process.

*Nomenklatura* operated through two types of list; one for positions to be filled and one for people eligible to fill them. Each level of political administration, from the Central Committee to the *raikom*, had a list of posts within its *nomenklatura*. For the most part *nomenklatura* was controlled through the cadres section of the *orgaspredotdel* of the relevant party organisation, although other departments, such as the

*agitpropotdel*, also controlled a number of posts. On the Central Committee's *nomenklatura* were senior party offices such as MK secretary and the headships of strategic trusts and key enterprises. Likhachev, for example, the director of the AMO plant, was a Central Committee appointee.<sup>7</sup> As we saw in chapter 2, the Central Committee also apparently controlled appointments to the Moscow *orgraspredotdel*. On the MK's *nomenklatura* were *raikom* secretaries, heads of Moscow *sovnarkhozy* and directors of enterprises of local or regional significance.<sup>8</sup> The *raikoms* and MK also had some say in the choice of factory party committee secretaries in strategic enterprises, although it is not clear whether this stake amounted to a power of selection.<sup>9</sup>

Although consultation was practised formally, the organisation with the power of *nomenklatura* made the final decision on any appointment. The system was cumbersome, with its tiers and parallel responsibilities. Some critics remarked that people appointed centrally could not be fitted to the job they were to take, and that a more flexible, 'individual' approach should be implemented. It was also felt that more flexibility might stamp out the corruption inevitable in so powerful a system of patronage.<sup>10</sup> But *nomenklatura* was preserved because it ensured that only people of proven capability could be appointed to strategic jobs.<sup>11</sup> As Uglanov put it, vetted appointees carried a guarantee endorsed by the party leadership itself.<sup>12</sup> Patronage was also viewed as an advantage of *nomenklatura*. In a system split by factional rivalry, it was important to be able to appoint cadres who were not only competent, but also politically congenial to the Politburo head of the apparatus in which they were to work.<sup>13</sup> All the while the leadership spoke with diverse voices, which was certainly the case throughout the period covered by this book, *nomenklatura* generated rival patronage structures each owing loyalty to a different institution or leading individual.<sup>14</sup> The apparatus was not homogenous. But it was clearly distinct from the rest of the community, whether party or non-party. Whatever the divisions between them, *nomenklatura* officials were set apart from ordinary activists, and as career bureaucrats worked to different rules.

## THE STATE AND ECONOMIC APPARATUSES

The promotion of a new generation of administrators proceeded steadily in the 1920s.<sup>15</sup> Although a large number of old St Petersburg government servants moved to Moscow in 1918, by 1929 64.9 per cent of



*sluzhashchie* in the capital had been appointed since the Revolution. The deployment of these new officials was uneven, however. Most were employed at the lower levels, often in jobs which would hardly count as 'white collar' at all.<sup>16</sup> Party representation in the state sector was mainly confined to the 'commanding heights' at one extreme and menial jobs at the other.

This general rule applied to the administration of industrial enterprises. In Moscow the promotion of new technicians was probably slower in the 1920s than nationally. Under Uglanov's leadership, party 'specialists' devoted to industrial efficiency prevailed over the doctrinaire advocates of 'proletarianisation' at any cost.<sup>17</sup> Uglanov himself resisted worker promotion on the grounds that it was harmful to industry. 'If we must always promote and promote and replace', he told a plenum of the MK in February 1928, 'the result would include a thirty per cent loss in output'.<sup>18</sup> His view was not unjustified. One speaker at the September 1928 MK plenum, probably exaggerating slightly, alleged that roughly half of Moscow's foremen and under-foremen, groups likely to provide many potential promotees, were 'absolutely illiterate' and 'could not even write their own names'.<sup>19</sup>

The question became acute by the end of the NEP period because new cadres were urgently needed everywhere in industry, especially in the middle range of technical jobs.<sup>20</sup> The demand for specialists at all technical levels was set to boom as industrialisation gathered pace.<sup>21</sup> By 1928 the shortfall was already severe. In Moscow's textile enterprises, for example, skilled weaving engineers were responsible on average for 8666 workers each.<sup>22</sup> Uglanov's solution was to encourage 'healthy competition' for jobs among young technical graduates, a policy which would have favoured non-proletarians as late as 1928.<sup>23</sup> But by the spring of 1928 numbers alone were not the main issue. The Right's resistance to proletarian promotions was increasingly to be criticised. As the Stalinists' commitment to 'proletarianising' the elite deepened, the social origin and political orientation of specialists were to become as important as criteria for their assessment in some circles as the quality of their training. In May 1928 *Bol'shevik* reminded its readers of the *principle* at stake in the promotion of proletarian, rather than 'bourgeois', cadres (*italics in original*).<sup>24</sup> In March 1929 Polonskii declared the preparation of competent 'new' specialists to be the 'sharpest problem of party work'.<sup>25</sup>

The other reason for the cadres shortage was that training had not been an overriding priority before 1928.<sup>26</sup> National figures for party membership in trusts and syndicates indicated that over 70 per cent of

leading officials in these organisations were Communists by 1928.<sup>27</sup> A survey published in 1929 gave the party layer among directors nationally as 93 per cent.<sup>28</sup> But party membership among engineers stood at approximately 2 per cent at the end of 1927.<sup>29</sup> A 1929 survey in *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* found that while 73 per cent of enterprise directors were drawn from the working class, only 4 per cent of technical staff had proletarian backgrounds. Although figures for party membership did not fully correspond to promotions, in general the problem of replacing the 'bourgeois' specialists below the level of the 'red' director remained unsolved. Even after the Shakhty trial, therefore, Bolshevik heads of institutions were in receipt of daily advice from people whose political standpoint was undeclared. Important technical decisions were being made by old specialists whose reliability, from the Bolsheviks' point of view, seemed questionable. People whose only mistake was to have received their training before the Revolution in Tsarist institutions were regarded as suspect. A programme of specialist education to train 'red' cadres was urgently needed.

In Moscow's offices *vydvizhenie*, the deliberate promotion of significant numbers of working-class activists, began in the early 1920s (see Table 9.1). In a single campaign in 1925, 300 people were 'promoted' to white-collar jobs in Moscow under the party's auspices.<sup>30</sup> Between June 1926 and June 1927, 2253 people were 'promoted to responsible work' in Moscow, 53 per cent of whom were workers from the bench.<sup>31</sup> In 1928, 2002 people were 'promoted' in Moscow.<sup>32</sup> Social origin, however, did not ensure 'proletarian' attitudes to work. The new arrivals were quickly absorbed into the culture prevailing in the host

Table 9.1 Promotion into the state apparatus, 1924–29

Institution	No. of responsible workers	No. of promotees			No. remaining in 1929
		1924	1925/7	1928	
NkTorg USSR	600	2			1
NkYust RSFSR	120	4	7		
NkPros RSFSR	250	3		4	7
NkFin RSFSR	200	6		3	9
Gosbank USSR	250	22	11	4	13
Tsentrosoyuz	450	20		12	22
NkFin USSR	500	15	9	8	22

Source: *Bol'shevik*, 1929, no. 8.

institution.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, as we shall see, many of the promotees were unsuitable in the first place, selected to reward faithful service or to remove an irritating comrade from the shop floor. Although the selection process was ostensibly democratic, promotees were seldom chosen by open meetings of their fellows.

In theory everyone at a given workplace should have been consulted about promotions, and candidates should have been selected after a succession of meetings and discussions. But the model seldom operated. In the first place, there was a lot of animosity from workers themselves about 'careerists' who sought to rise out of the ranks of the working class. Participation in selection meetings was very limited. Even within the factory party organisation, selection was often left to the cell buro or even to the secretary alone.<sup>34</sup> The workers themselves could be indifferent or hostile to the process. Their attitude was inspired at least in part by their correct perception that the ultimate choice lay with the party secretary. The lists from which successful promotees were to be chosen were drawn up in advance by the cell buro.<sup>35</sup> The fate of workers' 'own' candidates depended on their acceptability to senior officials. This was true even during the period of 'cultural revolution'. In 1930, for example, Breev, a peasant from the central black-earth area, was nominated both by his fellow collective farmers and by the rank and file Communists of the supervising factory, *Serp i Molot*, to chair a local *kolkhoz*. His candidacy, although supported by everyone involved at the grassroots level, was rejected by the factory authorities, in this case the trade union, on the grounds that he was 'too closely linked with agriculture' and that he had no administrative experience.<sup>36</sup>

Promotees were thus sent off to the alien world of the city's offices without the support of their former workmates as a source of self-justification. Many also lacked the basic skills necessary for their new tasks. A report on 250 Moscow trainees for posts of trade, banking and syndicates enrolled in 1927 found that 104 of them completed the course with 'weak arithmetic', 42 per cent with 'unsatisfactory Russian' and only 26 per cent with 'satisfactory political development'.<sup>37</sup> Factory committees often resisted the removal of their 'best' cadres, preferring to dispose of misfits if 'promotions' had to be made.<sup>38</sup> Party discussion papers calling for better training for promotees missed the basic point that before 1929 the most able candidates were often not getting as far as the selection meetings. Promotees frequently arrived incapable of taking on more complicated tasks than simple filing.<sup>39</sup> As many discovered, this was the most responsible task they would undertake in their new job for several years.

In principle it was the host institution's task to train promotees to take up responsible positions in their hierarchies. Since most institutions take some recruits from the lowest levels and train them to rise through the ranks, this was not an unreasonable plan in theory. Gosbank was mentioned in one report as an example of the principle in action. According to the report, new promotees there were given courses in banking and politics so that some could go forward into influential positions in the organisation.<sup>40</sup> For every account of successful deployment, however, there were many more claiming that promotees were given the most menial jobs. According to one writer, they were typically set to keep a register of the number of people who went in and out of the building where they worked.<sup>41</sup> In Narkompros, a woman promotee was reportedly set to pack books as her 'responsible work'.<sup>42</sup>

Not surprisingly promotees often felt disorientated and disappointed. Many did not remain in their new posts for long, preferring to return to production work. Up to a third of promotees to the Moscow *guberniya* labour department appointed in 1926 had left by 1929.<sup>43</sup> But it was only in 1929 that the problem began to receive extensive attention. Radical supporters of proletarianisation saw the relatively modest scale of promotions in the 1920s as a shortcoming. As they perceived, the promotion of two thousand people a year was not likely to create a revolution in the practices of bureaucracies whose combined staffs totalled roughly 400 000 people. Of those two thousand, moreover, fewer than half actually left their enterprises. Of the 2253 promoted in the year ending June 1927, 1602 remained in their enterprises, taking 'responsible' jobs such as foremen.<sup>44</sup> The comparable proportion of the 1928 promotees was 1471 out of 2002.<sup>45</sup> That left 650 and 531 promotees each year respectively for state posts, but even this figure is too high. Not everyone who left their own factory went into state or even managerial posts. Many seem merely to have become foremen elsewhere.<sup>46</sup>

As the leadership prepared a campaign of mass promotions, involving pre-selected 'thousands' rather than small groups, figures for earlier promotions began to see the light of day in the press. They showed that the number of workers deployed in responsible work outside their enterprise, or even their branch of industry, was tiny in the 1920s. One set published in *Bol'shevik* indicated the extent of the problem across several different branches of administration. The figures showed the small numbers of promotees overall and also that only about half remained in their new institutions, with the Commissariat of Justice (NKYust) and the financial institutions having especially poor records.

Another difficulty highlighted in 1929 was the promotees' failure to retain links with their old comrades back in the factory.<sup>47</sup> For the promotees who remained in their new posts, sustaining contact with working class life was a near-impossible task. In theory, promotees were supposed to report back regularly to their factories.<sup>48</sup> But for many this responsibility was too time-consuming, and when their reports were greeted with hostility or incomprehension, it was tempting to 'break off from the mass' altogether. Ambitious promotees, including those who arrived in Moscow from the provinces, were often anxious to use their new opportunities to the full by embarking on study courses in the capital. In these cases promotees played little active part in the social and political life of the institution to which they were attached, let alone that of their factory of origin.<sup>49</sup>

For all these reasons, promotion, as a steady policy for changing the composition and ethos of the state institutions, was of only limited value in the 1920s. Beginning in 1928, a more radical policy aimed to cut through these problems by mass promotion and its corollary, the purging of existing officials. The reasons for the policy break in 1928–9 were complex. Fitzpatrick describes 'cultural revolution' as follows:

It was a worker-promotion movement linked to a political campaign to discredit the 'Right Opposition' within the Party. It was an iconoclastic youth movement directed against 'bureaucratic' authority. It was a process whereby militant Communist groups in the professions established local dictatorships and attempted to revolutionise their disciplines. It was, finally, a heyday for revolutionary theorists and 'hare-brained schemers', whose blueprints for the new society not only attracted disciples among the Communist cultural militants but also in many cases gained solid institutional support.<sup>50</sup>

Purges in the state apparatus had occurred periodically before 1930. A campaign to reduce office staffs was launched in the summer of 1926 under the auspices of VSNKh.<sup>51</sup> Linked to the 'regime of economy', it was intended to reduce administrative costs through reductions in paid staff. In Moscow the MK and MKK took a leading role in the campaign. As well as helping to cut administrative costs, it was intended to make economies in the factories more palatable by showing that they were also biting in offices and government departments.<sup>52</sup> The strategem largely failed, however, and the regime of economy in general was popularly construed as a further attack on workers' living standards.<sup>53</sup> Generally management was believed to have cushioned

itself against the cuts.<sup>54</sup> Partly in response to such criticisms the campaign was relaxed in the autumn and winter of 1926–7.

The idea of cost-cutting was not abandoned for long. Despite proletarian protests and Opposition propaganda against the cuts,<sup>55</sup> the two goals, greater economy and an attack on the bureaucracy, remained high priorities. The campaign resumed in the spring of 1927 with renewed vigour. In 1927 the rationalisation of industry campaign was accompanied by flamboyant revelations of corruption and ‘bureaucratism’ by officials.<sup>56</sup> Commissions of Moscow workers examined the practices of major institutions and ruled on methods of rationalising their work.<sup>57</sup> Staff cuts ranging from 20 to 40 per cent were ordered in some branches of state and economic administration.<sup>58</sup> An atmosphere of public vigilance was encouraged. Exhibitions were organised to promote rationalisation, and staff responsible for implementation on the shop floor were given training to prepare them for the task.<sup>59</sup> But staff reductions still did not always fall in the desired areas. Among the problems was the reluctance of rationalisation commissions to take measures against the advice of senior administrators. Some cases where workers were intimidated or overruled by ‘bureaucratic’ administrators were reported in the press, but these were probably only the tip of the iceberg.<sup>60</sup> Popular resistance to rationalisation was justified, for the axe fell more frequently on workers and junior office staff than on the top tiers of the bureaucracy.<sup>61</sup> At the same time, the general attack caused widespread demoralisation among officials.<sup>62</sup> Rationalisation could not be sustained for long within the existing policy framework without bringing the city’s offices to a virtual standstill.

Instead of relaxing the pressure on the apparatus, however, the solution favoured by a vocal section of the party at all levels was to intensify it, changing the atmosphere in Soviet offices forever. Between 1927 and the beginning of the purge of 1929–30 a new assault on the privileges and influence of the older generation of career administrators was mounted, in many cases more or less spontaneously. Although rapidly extended to the rest of the Soviet Union, the ‘self-criticism’ (*samokritika*) campaign began in Moscow, where the first attacks began in the spring of 1928.<sup>63</sup> Coming hard on the heels of the Shakhty trial, self-criticism encouraged junior personnel – workers and technical personnel in factories, junior administrators in offices – to criticise the shortcomings of their superiors. As the term implies, senior officials were also supposed to examine their own work, and to make suggestions for general or specific improvements. At the factory level the campaign was a success. Like the other attacks on specialists which followed, it

met with popular approval, directing discontent about the difficulties of factory life at a target which had long been a cause of resentment. As a participant recalled, 'everyone was stimulated to "tell all" about defects, errors, methods for improving things – in the general press, in factory and farm papers, on the bulletin-board sheets known as wallpapers'.<sup>64</sup>

This 'stimulation' itself came partly from the press. Among the scandals mentioned, corruption or embezzlement were 'uncovered' at the Geofizika factory, at Gaz No. 1, at the Kauchuk factory, and in the administrations of Gosbank and Narkompros.<sup>65</sup> The factory scandals mainly concerned the party cells, and were dealt with under the auspices of the party purge of 1929, but those in Gosbank and Narkompros were linked with the more general need for a purge of the state bureaucracy. Leaders responsible for 'suppressing self-criticism' were removed, and officials deemed to have been shielding them reprimanded. The Gosbank affair received the most publicity, with fresh revelations about corruption appearing daily for a two-week period in August 1929. Heavily implicated were Sheinman, the director of the bank, and a number of his deputies, including Telesin and Polyakov. Sheinman, himself a Communist Party member since 1903, was accused of treating Communist members of the bank's administration as 'lackeys', and of excessive drinking, peculation, 'careerism' and corrupt promotion practices.<sup>66</sup> Senior administrators at the bank were accused of collectively 'suppressing self-criticism' and of mis-appropriating the bank's funds for speculation.<sup>67</sup> Members of Sokol'niki *raikom* were also reprimanded for tolerating the situation.<sup>68</sup>

The whole affair was accompanied by renewed calls for a popular assault upon the 'bureaucrats' who were 'suppressing self-criticism'. The campaign stirred latent tensions at all levels in the city's administration. Like a genie released from its bottle in 1928, self-criticism caused widespread disruption. Criticism was often orchestrated by the Komsomol, and could not always be controlled by the party leadership.<sup>69</sup> Doubts about its wisdom are the surest proof that *samokritika* was not simply a matter of window-dressing to hide a more concerted attack on political targets.<sup>70</sup>

But despite its misgivings the leadership benefitted from self-criticism campaigns. The anti-bureaucratic enthusiasm of younger activists brought long-desired changes which steady campaigns of 'rationalisation' had failed to achieve. Among these was a sharp diminution in the influence of the 'bourgeois' specialist. At Krasnyi Proletarii debates between younger specialists and the older, pre-revolutionary technicians flared into a major argument about the factory's reconstruction.

Anastas Mikoyan, then closely associated with the factory's affairs, helped the younger group to organise its 'complaints' against the older specialists. The result was a stormy meeting, at which the views of the younger cadres prevailed. The dislocation in the factory's administration may have been disruptive – certainly this was the view of Satel', the trust head – but it caused a shift in the balance of power away from the 'bourgeois' specialists and in favour of a group more zealous for rapid changes within the factory.<sup>71</sup> In the next two years this process would be continued in an atmosphere dominated by the anti-specialist trials of the 'Industrial Party' and the 'Mensheviks'.<sup>72</sup>

Clearly these campaigns were not launched simply because the party needed *samokritika* as much as it needed 'air and water'.<sup>73</sup> The 'revelations' at Gosbank were very convenient, providing a means of disgracing the staunchly anti-inflationist Sheinman without the necessity for a public discussion of the real arguments. Although Sheinman was living abroad by the time the scandal broke, it is unlikely that the specific charges levelled at him were true, with the possible exception of the 'suppression of criticism' itself. The very excess of the accusations betrayed the campaign's deeper political origins. These were very broad, and probably not initially specific. Although the self-criticism campaign, like the subsequent purge, was directed at the political Right, its focus was not as narrow as that implies. As one commentator noted, it was aimed at those who 'although they have done nothing wrong, merely want a quiet life'.<sup>74</sup> Its effect was to shake the city's specialists and to create an atmosphere where complacency about the new course could not be sustained.

This process was continued by the purge of 1929–30. Although its initial stages appear to have been sluggish, it helped to generate a new atmosphere in relations between the party and the state apparatus. Early failures were attributed to the unexpected intensity of bureaucratic resistance to the purge, although they were probably also the result of poor preparation and a general disbelief among members of purge commissions that the leadership really meant them to speak out.<sup>75</sup> By the autumn little progress had been made. In August a joint plenum of the MK and MKK noted that the purge of the state apparatus was unsatisfactory. In particular it was said to be being carried out 'formally', too rapidly and without the participation of workers. The plenum resolution called for the establishment of a commission of 150 experienced 'responsible' party and other administrative cadres to supervise the work of the purge commissions. 'Passivity' was henceforth to be a breach of party instructions.<sup>76</sup>

The first Moscow *oblast'* conference reiterated the need for



persistence. Molotov emphasised the difficulties raised by the purge in his speech, giving the example of resistance by specialists in the Leningrad Academy of Sciences.<sup>77</sup> Bauman's speech focused on the need for an intensification of the class struggle against 'enemies' abroad and at home. As well as stressing the need for self-criticism, he reviewed the current state of the purge, although his interpretation of the 'class struggle' extended far beyond a check on bureaucratic practices and personnel.<sup>78</sup> Criticism of the laxity of the purge was a feature of the discussion which followed.<sup>79</sup> Thereafter the campaign took on a new intensity. Military language was used to describe it. The metaphor in constant use was 'offensive', the attack upon entrenched officials. Bauman's use of phrases like 'class struggle' and 'socialist offensive' reflected the standard practice. 'I come to you from the front', Ryndin told a meeting in October 1929. 'From the purge of Narkomfin front!'<sup>80</sup>

Despite the rhetoric, including the conscious revival of Civil War imagery, the effects of the purge on the state apparatus were not everywhere disruptive.<sup>81</sup> The most affected branch of the apparatus was the financial and banking side, now suffering from its calls for financial stringency in the face of the rapid industrialisation drive. The financial organs were consistently the highest priority in accounts of the purge, the first to be examined and then the first to be re-purged. The result, at the level of the Moscow *oblast'* alone, was a loss of 324 jobs in the *oblast'* financial department, the cutting of 84 posts from the *oblast'* land department (*zemotdel*) and a 24 per cent cut in the trade department (*torgotdel*).<sup>82</sup> Although accounts of the purge now stress the savings produced by these cuts,<sup>83</sup> these were only secondary compared with the political effects. A report of June 1930 marked the end of the purge in a number of Moscow institutions. At that time, a total of 83 040 people had been investigated, of whom 6917 (8.3 per cent) had lost their jobs. A further 13 per cent had received reprimands or warnings relating to their work. In the financial organs the most common single reason for purging, accounting for 41 per cent of sackings, was that individuals were found to be 'class alien'. Other categories used to explain exclusions were drunkenness, indiscipline and 'bureaucratism', and embezzlement.<sup>84</sup> Pure fabrications would have been difficult to sustain, and undoubtedly indiscipline, broadly defined, was a problem. On the other hand, the sort of people who were now being denounced as 'class enemies' had been at work in the state apparatus for thirteen years, and lax behaviour was a problem which pervaded the whole of the Soviet system. There is no doubt that 'discoveries' made during the purge were intended as excuses to rid the

apparatus of people who would not follow the current line and to create an atmosphere of vigilance.

The purge helped to put 'bourgeois' specialists on the defensive and added to the intense radicalism of the 'cultural revolution'. But it also created problems, increasing the secrecy of some departments, disrupting the efficiency of most. And many zealous working-class 'controllers' continued to be overawed when they arrived in the stifling world of the specialist. This can be illustrated by looking at the question of *shefstvo*, the relationship of patronage which was supposed to exist between state institutions (the client) and Moscow factories (the patron). The idea was that a standing commission of factory workers would regularly inspect the work of the state institution for which they were responsible. In this task, they were to receive direct guidance from the Central Control Commission. Introduced as a spin-off of the purge, *shefstvo* was designed to overcome some of the problems which obstructed *vydvizhenie* and purging. First, the factory had a steady, identifiable responsibility; evasion by members of the commission was more difficult. Second, *shefstvo* commissions were groups of people who knew each other and could provide backing for each other when the client institution tried to overrule workers' demands. Third, the length of the relationship would help to overcome the difficulty workers felt in getting to know the technical intricacies of an institution.

The report of the Elektrozavod *shefstvo* commission, which worked in Narkomfin, highlighted a number of persistent problems. The *shefstvo* commission was divided, and did not always find time to meet and discuss a collective strategy. Despite the involvement of the Central Control Commission, authority was still a problem, with the factory workers feeling they did not have the power to overrule Narkomfin 'experts'. 'Our authority, the authority of the working mass, does not stand as high as it should', reported one member of the team.<sup>85</sup> Understanding the finance organisation was another problem. Elektrozavod representatives felt that they needed more help, if not from Narkomfin experts, then from the MK's own advisers on financial administration. Finally there remained the problem of apathy back in the factory; members of the *shefstvo* commission complained that they did not feel they had any kind of reserve to call on for support or additional workers in carrying out their task.<sup>86</sup>

To some extent the problems of Elektrozavod arose because it was one of the first factories to experiment with the idea of *shefstvo* over an institution (as opposed to a collective farm or agricultural region).

In general the idea of *shefstvo* was regarded as an improvement on 'campaign' purging alone, and was advocated by an MKK resolution of 29 December 1929.<sup>87</sup> *Shefstvo* continued after the purge, although problems of the kind experienced by the Elektroavtomat workers persisted. In 1931 AMO's *shefstvo* of a central state institution was ended as a result of its poor record, and Dinamo's *shefstvo* of a tank regiment was ordered to be submitted to a regular check by the presidium of the metalworkers' union.<sup>88</sup> Part of the problem, especially at this time, was the shortage of cadres capable of carrying out *shefstvo* responsibilities, but underlying this were tensions between the factories and government departments. These could not be dispelled by declaring that the proletariat ought to be master of the institutions in a workers' state.

In general, then, popular control over the state, as opposed to party institutions, was limited. But control was not the only means by which ordinary workers could influence the government and economic elites. As we saw earlier, the period 1928–31 was to be the golden age of the *vydvizhenets*, the promotee. Parallel to the purges and public investigations, promotion in these four years attained mass levels. Training programmes were designed to take on 'thousands' of recruits at a time. Once trained they were directed to specialist jobs, either in industry, where the majority of them worked as technicians, foremen or even assistant managers, or less frequently in government, which saw promotions into a range of its branches during and after the first Five Year Plan. In Moscow 1400 Communists were selected for training as leading cadres (administrators rather than merely technicians) in the three years 1928–30, the majority of them workers by social origin. Among these the proportion of 'workers from the bench' increased, from 7 per cent in 1928 to 23.5 per cent in 1930. For over half of these, the reason given for their promotion was earlier experience as activists in party, soviet or trade union organisations.<sup>89</sup>

Not all promotees went to VUZy or VTUZy for training. Programmes were also established in the enterprises where they worked. Trekhgornaya Manufaktura had boasted its own training scheme since the 1920s,<sup>90</sup> but by 1930 a number of other large factories in the capital were training their own specialists. Serp i Molot, for example, expanded its own training scheme to prepare specialists not only for use in Moscow but also for deployment to projects such as Magnitogorsk and Dneprostroi.<sup>91</sup> Elektroavtomat set about training 1500 workers in the winter of 1929 as a step towards filling its 6000 potential vacancies for skilled workers and technicians.<sup>92</sup> An enterprise school was established

at the AMO automobile factory in 1930 to train automobile engineers. Despite the low general educational level of its recruits (more than two thirds were semi-literate or had received only elementary education), it was soon producing trainees for AMO and for other automobile factories, such as the newly-established plant in Nizhnii-Novgorod.<sup>93</sup> Industry was not alone in providing such courses. Bauman *raion* soviet ran a course in 1931 to prepare workers from the bench for administrative jobs in its offices. It also offered 278 'elective' part-time administrative jobs to workers as a route out of the factory. Zamoskvorech'e *raion* accepted 158 workers 'from the bench' in the winter of 1929–30 for training in office work.<sup>94</sup>

The scale of promotions is difficult to assess. Enrolment figures from the VTUZY and factory training schemes are only a rough guide. As with party education, *otsev*, the abandonment of courses, was a significant problem. Kaganovich noted in 1929 that only about a fifth of students enrolled at VUZY would complete their courses. He suggested that higher wages in industry attracted them away from non-technical training, while difficult living conditions, a problem common to all students at the time, deterred even the most enthusiastic. A 'thousand' arriving in Moscow from the provinces in 1929, he said, had found that no accommodation at all was available, and had been obliged to sleep on the station platform for several nights.<sup>95</sup> 'Thousands' recruited for training in VTUZY seem to have done better, with a 3 per cent drop-out rate after two years.<sup>96</sup> But completing the course was only the first hurdle. Once promoted, many *vydvizhentsy* found their new jobs unattractive, and turnover among the newly promoted, just under 50 per cent per year in 1928–9, was higher than average. 'They move to try out their strength', remarked one official.<sup>97</sup>

Despite the problems, however, overall figures for promotion in the period 1929–31 are impressive. *Vydvizhenie* provided more than half of the cadres needed for the rapidly expanding technical and managerial elites of the 1930s. Over 44 000 new engineering jobs were created in the civilian sector of the Soviet economy in the period 1928–32, and over 53 000 new posts in administration and government. Although not all of these posts were filled by proletarian promotees, it was official policy to give preference to workers. Moreover, workers now predominated in higher education, ensuring a proletarian future for Soviet technology and administration. Over 120 000 university students in 1931 were classified as workers or children of workers, as against 40 000 in 1928.<sup>98</sup>

Taken together, then, officially-sanctioned pressure on the apparatus 'from below', backed up by *vydvizhenie*, gave some of the more active

rank and files direct influence over the state and economic apparatuses. 'Control' in its various forms – purging, rationalisation, self-criticism and *shefstvo* – was erratic, but when it hit hard, it could change the entire staff of an office or factory administration in a matter of weeks. Promotion took longer to bear fruit, despite the fact that the duration of training schemes was cut to a minimum by 1929. Once trained, however, workers from the factory floor could reasonably aspire to *nomenklatura*-controlled official posts.

For the next generation such aspirations were soon to be blighted by high-level party disapproval, however. Between 1928 and 1931 almost any kind of pressure on the state and economic apparatuses stood a chance of being tolerated and even encouraged. But the period of 'cultural revolution' was short. By 1931 official attitudes were changing. There were many reasons for the retreat. One was the variability of the campaigns' impact. Not all branches of government and management were affected. Not all specialists were helpless in the face of onslaughts 'from below'. The chaos created by vicious but sporadic attacks left loopholes open for the more agile, the corrupt and the well-connected. Another problem arose when the value of individual specialists or types of specialism was occasionally perceived. Indispensable experts were often spared criticism, or, if purged, might be reinstated without publicity. Krasnyi Proletarii saw examples of this in 1929. Its chief engineer, Tugarinov, was purged, along with two other leading specialists, one of whom, Mart'yanov, was a 'professor of machine construction'. Despite the efforts of the new promotees, the factory suffered as a result of these losses, and by the end of 1929, Tugarinov at least had been reinstated, 'having given his word to the government'.<sup>99</sup>

Another reason for the retreat was the continuing fear among top officials that excessive licence to *samokritika* would disrupt the whole system of government, including the party's primacy.<sup>100</sup> There was cynicism from ordinary people as well. 'The sooner we're finished with this rubbish, the better', was a typical comment, reflecting distaste for the diversion from practical work.<sup>101</sup> After 1931 the control principle would remain at the centre of official policy, and indeed resurfaced in different forms later in the 1930s. But from 1931 a new tone was perceptible in official rhetoric. The leadership had not been solely responsible for launching the 'cultural revolution', and it did not fully control it, but when the time came it was the leadership, the party elite, which decided when the episode should end.

The retreat began with a truce between specialists and party leaders. 1931 saw the beginning of the specialist's rehabilitation<sup>102</sup> and the first

signs that 'proletarian policies' were going to be curbed.<sup>103</sup> Promotion also slowed in 1931. The training schemes began to be criticised, as were their products.<sup>104</sup> An acute shortage of skilled labour in the factories prompted managers to call a halt to *vydvizhenie*, especially as 'cadre' workers, with some years' experience, were badly needed to supervise and even socialise the new generation of peasants who were joining the factory workforce by the early 1930s.<sup>105</sup> By 1932 the 'cultural revolution' was over, and with it the opportunities for ordinary workers to influence the state and economic apparatuses to such a significant extent.

### THE PARTY APPARATUS: INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY, *SAMOKRITIKA* AND PARTY DISCIPLINE

What were the possibilities for promotion and popular influence within the party elite? Official statements presented the party as an example to other bureaucracies. Campaigns intended for general application were often implemented in the party apparatus with fanfares of publicity. 'Rationalisation' was an example; others included purging and 'intra-party democracy'. In theory, too, the party was an organisation of equals. Although professional politicians, the *apparatchiki*, had heavier responsibilities than ordinary activists 'at the bench', the notion of 'comradeship' was still officially accepted. In the 1920s and early 1930s it was still common practice, for example, for party officials to be addressed as 'ty', the singular, familiar form of address, rather than 'vy', even by lower-ranking party members.<sup>106</sup>

But behind this informality and 'comradeship', the reality was that an elite had emerged which was clearly differentiated from the party rank and file. Whatever the social origin of the party elite, by the early 1920s, their lives were far removed from those of the workers their party was supposed to represent. Many seldom entered a factory for any reason after the Revolution. Some aspects of this differentiation were popularly understood and widely tolerated. The 'freeing' of key administrators from ordinary productive labour was regarded as necessary for efficient government, for example. 'Commune' theories of administration had been abandoned within weeks of the Revolution.<sup>107</sup> However, certain other aspects of elite life, including the infamous 'Kremlin Ration' were less obviously justified.<sup>108</sup>

Party statisticians generally used social situation when they were aiming to show how democratic the organisation was. Increases in the

proportion of workers by social situation were taken as proof that the Left were wrong to dub the party as bureaucratic rather than proletarian.<sup>109</sup> Despite the propaganda, however, the figures on social composition were not consistently comforting to the leadership. At *raikom* level, the proportion of workers by social situation was considerably lower than in the organisation as a whole.<sup>110</sup> In 1927 only 26 per cent of *raikom* members in Moscow were workers by social situation.<sup>111</sup> In July 1930, only 41.1 per cent of *raion*-level activists in the Moscow *oblast'* were workers by social situation. This was partly a reflection of the effect on social composition of *ex-officio* members from the managements of local factories and from offices. Among *raikom* secretaries, the proportion of workers by social situation was higher, 68.3 per cent.<sup>112</sup> But although the propaganda of the time made much of the increase in the proportion of workers by social situation, as an indicator of political participation for the historian, it is unreliable. 'Social situation' did not necessarily correspond with current occupation, and even in the factory cells people who appeared as 'workers' might not have been at the bench for some time.

Figures for the social composition of the higher echelons of the party elite illustrate this point clearly. Among elite members of the party apparatus, the proportion of 'real' workers was negligible. Power in Moscow was in the hands of a stratum of people who may have been working class in origin, but whose careers since the Revolution had been in the party apparatus itself. With few exceptions, they were also *podpol'shchiki*, party members who had joined before the February Revolution. Until 1924 only *podpol'shchiki* had been permitted to hold elite positions such as *gubkom* secretary.<sup>113</sup> The thirteenth Party Congress amended this to a requirement that such people should have been party members for a minimum of six years.<sup>114</sup> But change came slowly to the elite in the 1920s and early 1930s. Turnover at the top was restricted before the mid-1930s.<sup>115</sup> Although the proportion of *podpol'shchiki* in the party as a whole was falling, among the elite in Moscow it remained relatively stable until 1934. In October 1927, for example, there were only 10 758 *podpol'shchiki* in the party as a whole, or 1.4 per cent of the total. A large number of these, 2709, were in the Moscow Party, bringing the proportion there to roughly 2 per cent.<sup>116</sup> This was nowhere near to reflecting the proportion in the leading party organs. While 69.2 per cent of the 130 MK members elected to represent Moscow or the *raions* (as opposed to the rural *okrugs*) at the first Moscow *oblast'* conference in September 1929 were workers by social origin, the proportion of MK members recruited since the Civil War

was very small. After nearly six years of rapid recruitment, only 6.9 per cent of MK members in 1929 had been recruited since 1924, while 44.6 per cent were *podpol'shchiki*.<sup>117</sup> Of the 20 MK buro members in 1929 (excluding the members from the *okrugs*, for whom information is not given), all except five were *podpol'shchiki*. The five, who had all joined before 1920, were Goreva and Zaitsev, both relatively junior members, and three of the six *raikom* secretaries, Kozlov, Shirin and Mikhailevskii.

The MGK elected in January 1932 included two people who had joined the party in 1928, but they were both workers from the bench serving a single term. The proportion of *podpol'shchiki* among the 112 full members had increased since 1929, to 50.9 per cent.<sup>118</sup> Members who had joined during the Civil War made up 31.3 per cent of the total. That left only 17.8 per cent with post-1921 membership, of whom 9.8 per cent, slightly more than in 1929, had joined during the mass campaigns since 1924.<sup>119</sup> The MGK buro remained dominated by *podpol'shchiki* (12 out of 14 full members), the exceptions being Khrushchev (1918) and Gaidul' (1919). Among the candidates, only the Komsomol representative had joined the party since 1920.

These figures show that at the elite level the political struggles of the 1920s were not fought between party generations or between members of the apparatus and new 'proletarian' activists. The Stalinists who replaced Moscow's old, broadly 'Right' leadership in 1928 were not recent recruits, but members of equivalent seniority.<sup>120</sup> Even in 1932, after four years of 'cultural revolution', the party apparatus was headed by a stratum which was not typical of the organisation as a whole.<sup>121</sup> If length of party membership, rather than social origin, is taken as the test for the accessibility of posts, then the best most rank and filers could aspire to in Moscow before 1932 would have been the secretaryship of a factory or shop cell.

Although these patterns were replicated elsewhere in the Soviet Union, it is likely that Moscow's elite was exceptionally difficult to penetrate. Posts in the capital were particularly prestigious. Careers like Khrushchev's were rare in Moscow politics.<sup>122</sup> Most political figures spent a period outside the capital, in party or other administrative posts, between their years as local *aktivy* and their eventual promotion to a position of leadership in Moscow. Polonskii, for example, spent several years as the head of the Nizhnii-Novgorod Trade Union Council, a post which also gave him a seat on the *guberniya* party committee buro, before returning to Moscow in 1925 as the secretary of the Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*.<sup>123</sup> Ryndin, who like



Polonskii was to become second secretary of the MK, spent six years in the provinces, in Perm, the Urals and Zlatoust, before coming to Moscow to work in the MKK.<sup>124</sup> Rather than rising within the Moscow organisation, successful activists from the capital were likely to be moved to work in the provinces.

If the elite was remote, however, the possibilities for promotion were better lower down. The turnover of personnel in the lower and middle tiers of the apparatus was rapid. Access improved as the number of responsible administrative posts expanded. Between December 1926 and October 1927 the *aktiv* is said to have swelled from 30 915 people to 40 673.<sup>125</sup> At this level, promotion for ordinary workers was common, and activists' length of membership more or less reflected the average in the party as a whole. It was hoped that workers who joined the party would take on duties, including propaganda work, the leadership of societies and the responsibilities of *grupporg*. Members who showed dedication in these tasks were eligible to run for more senior posts, including membership of the factory cell buro (see Table 9.2). In theory the secretary of the buro was elected from these members. Figures on the composition of cell buros in Moscow factories illustrate this process in action.

Table 9.2 shows that the number of older party members was declining steadily at this level as new recruits were taking their places. The process continued into the 1930s as the pace and scale of recruitment increased. Figures given in *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* state that by 1930, as few as 2 to 7 per cent of the membership of Moscow's factory committees had

Table 9.2 Composition of cell buros in selected Moscow factories by social situation and party stazh

	Cell secretaries (%)		Buro composition (%)	
	Workers	Party stazh pre-1918	Workers	Party stazh pre-1918
April 1923	63	18		
Dec 1923	63	23		
Nov 1924	70	18	72	20
Oct 1925	81	21	78	14
Dec 1926	83	17	79	12
Oct 1927	87	12	84	9

Source: SK, 1927, nos 19–20, p. 95.

joined the party before 1918 (roughly equivalent to the Moscow average), although the composition of the buros may have been slightly different.<sup>126</sup>

Did this expansion in the *aktiv* reflect a greater distribution of power within the population? The problem is that the definition of ‘activist’ included both cell secretaries, who could have a large amount of local responsibility, and less important figures like *grupporgy* and *agitprop* workers. Both types of activist could influence policy implementation, sometimes crucially. But they were not all equal to their tasks. Some were poorly prepared for responsibility, over-worked or unwilling to devote time to party affairs. Closely guided, or even by-passed by the cell buros,<sup>127</sup> many were the executives of other people’s policies, rather than initiators themselves. However, hard and fast conclusions about their influence are risky; we have already seen how important a role they played in the shaping of the party’s role in industry and in the mediation of propaganda. The relationship between the *aktiv* and the leadership can be analysed only by looking at real cases. Neither the official statements about ‘democracy’ nor the conclusions of outside observers provide a reliable guide.

The Moscow *aktiv* was not entirely typical. The MK and *raion* leaderships were figures of national status, and Moscow Communists generally were aware of their own importance. Described by Lenin as the vanguard of the Soviet Communist Party, they were keen to defend their claim against that of their Leningrad rivals. In this respect, they were usually more committed than activists in more remote areas of the USSR. How much influence did they exert over the city’s political elite?

An important aspect of ‘intra-party democracy’ was the selection of local officials. Theoretically, local cells were encouraged to elect their own. Appointments from above were officially presented as being unfortunate necessities occasioned by the local cell’s inability to decide on a suitable candidate.<sup>128</sup> Reports of election campaigns, which were held in all localities simultaneously, boasted of the percentage turn-out at ‘report-election meetings’ as evidence that democratic processes were in healthy order. Moscow in particular was expected to show high levels of participation because of its concentration of workers and capital city status. Typically, turn-outs would reach about 70 per cent of voting members, although the figure for women could be as little as half of that.<sup>129</sup>

The turn-out bore little relation to the extent of ‘democracy’, however. Two criticisms in particular stood out. First, candidates were not

selected by straightforward nomination, but by pre-arranged 'lists'. These were vetted by party officials, thus preventing the discussion of obviously unsuitable candidates. Lists were a powerful means of extending official influence. Their use to boost support for the apparatus was a stumbling block for the Stalin group in Moscow in 1928. In October 1928, Polonskii proposed the abolition of these lists, a move which was described as 'broad democracy' but which was no more than a temporary device to break the power of rightist appointees in the *raions* and factory cells.<sup>130</sup> Second, a number of posts were reserved for apparatus nominees through the *nomenklatura* system, giving the lie to the idea that the party leadership desired the abolition of official nominations on all fronts.

'Party democracy' thus involved two principles. People had to be involved in the party's work and encouraged to feel that they shared in the shaping of its goals. On the other hand, participation was limited by the centre's fears of indiscipline and the emergence of oppositions from among the rank and file. After 1928, a tendency to less caution developed, partly coinciding with the industrialisation drive, but also encouraged by the results of a number of experimental policies. The election experiment of October 1928, for example, illustrated that the lowest levels in the party tended to be loyal to the Central Committee majority, particularly if they could be allowed to criticise the intermediate party organs. An appeal to the 'masses', if carefully controlled, could be a useful weapon against recalcitrant local officials. The expansion of recruitment and growth of the party *aktiv* were also signs of the new emphasis. Other policies characteristic of the period included self-criticism and the purge of 1929.

Self-criticism was less of a success within the party than outside it. The press tended to exaggerate the failures, giving many examples of 'suppression' in order to whip up enthusiasm for the campaign among the rank and file. *Martenovka* for example, caricatured the reaction of party cells in *Serp i Molot*. 'Why should we stand there and beat ourselves in front of the *aktiv*?', it reported secretaries as asking, or 'Since we don't work badly, all we need to do is to say our work is satisfactory'.<sup>131</sup> Criticisms of the party apparatus, however, were conspicuously absent. The censored press reflected official values in this respect. Individual local officials might be attacked, but it was clear that the party's policy and leaders were intended to be virtually immune. Thus when Mandel'shtam encouraged members not to fear the word 'deviation' (see above, p. 58), he was committing a serious error. His own 'deviant' position was not the only reason for Stalin's censure.

As well as appearing to be a rallying-cry for the Right, his words suggested that rank and filers might criticize broad policy issues. The leadership's fear that discipline would collapse set clear boundaries for the campaign. As one MK member remarked at the September 1928 plenum, 'we must not under any circumstances relax discipline, and we must even increase it, because if we do not we may have a lot of problems over discipline'.<sup>132</sup>

It is hard to assess how far 'discipline', as officially defined, was maintained. Judging from the published sources, the party's leaders were very seldom attacked, and only then by 'opportunists' like the Podol'sk factory workers. On the other hand, accounts in the archives record direct criticisms of policy by rank and file members. The exile of Trotsky, the export of grain at a time of shortage, the policy of deploying party activists outside their factories to the detriment of local interests – all these were criticised at Krasnyi Proletarii in 1929. Self-criticism itself, as we saw in chapter 2, was viewed in some quarters as a phoney policy which would not touch the 'stinking' elite. As well as criticising official policies, rank and filers abused the campaign for their own purposes, following the leadership's example and denouncing awkward political enemies. Self-criticism in the localities was a tool of the rising generation in the struggle for promotion, and was used against party officials as well as specialists. As Kravchenko recalled, 'self-criticism sometimes became an underhand method of struggle for place and for power'.<sup>133</sup>

Self-criticism also created an atmosphere in which *nomenklatura* officials could find themselves exposed to attack, although very few examples of this can be found in the sources. One was the Giber case of 1929. Giber, the secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*, was criticised for negligence in the Gosbank affair. Although Bauman intervened to reinstate him, overturning a *raikom* resolution calling for his removal, he disappeared from Moscow politics a few weeks later.<sup>134</sup> This kind of popular pressure was precisely what the leadership feared from *samokritika*, so incidents like this were kept as quiet as possible. However, it is important not to dismiss the whole movement because extreme cases were not common. Self-criticism did produce attacks on the party apparatus from below, even if most of the 'spontaneous' conflicts were confined to the lower ranks and to criticisms between adjacent tiers in the hierarchy. Senior party officials could be protected, but they were not wholly immune from attack. Below the level of the *raion* and MK leaderships, moreover, criticism was more open and produced noticeable changes. This helps to account for the enthusiasm

of participants in the campaign, some of whom believed that by attacking corruption or irrationality they were truly contributing to the building of socialism. The purge, however, aroused less enthusiastic responses, mainly because it was neither as spontaneous nor as effective.

The timing of the purge was not accidental. Although purging was a regular feature of party life, no full-scale campaign had been held since 1921. It was not that the leadership needed a cover for removing Right deviationists. Organised opponents of the new course had been removed from the Moscow Party in 1928. Further political removals followed during the purge, but a public trial would have been much less difficult to arrange. Nor was the purge aimed at streamlining the party by removing 'ballast'.<sup>135</sup> The 1929 purge was accompanied by a campaign of intensified recruitment which led to a further reduction in standards at the level of selection. The purge had disadvantages – it was time-consuming, and in 1929 party members already had too many calls on their time to fulfil their duties adequately. It was disruptive in the first full year of the Five Year Plan. More than another duty for overworked officials, it was also the cause of widespread stress as people's careers and livelihoods hung in the balance. Despite these problems, its advantage was that it raised the consciousness and vigilance of party members, warning them of the consequences of even a passive attitude towards the new policies of socialist offensive. As well as this political advantage, it was hoped that the purge would raise the standing of members by showing that the party took personal and public discipline seriously. It was important to discredit the idea that anyone could remain a Communist party member regardless of their conduct. At a time of uncertainty, when the party needed to show that it was united and self-confident, the advantages of a public cleansing operation were clear.

Abuses and inefficiency marred the campaign from the outset. The first problem was lack of preparation. Announced at the sixteenth Party Conference in April 1929, the purge in Moscow was to be conducted in two stages, ending in September.<sup>136</sup> This schedule was excessively optimistic, especially in view of the other pressures on the party's time. The demand for speed also helped to foster the impression that the purge was not to be taken seriously. Two types of complaint followed; the first, that the cells were not moving fast enough,<sup>137</sup> the second, that important questions were being neglected in an attempt to get through the disruption too quickly.<sup>138</sup> The procedure for purging was cumbrous. In production cells, for example, all members were expected to attend the purge meetings,<sup>139</sup> and a wide range of aspects of individual

behaviour were to be scrutinised.<sup>140</sup> Such meetings could last for hours, the checking of an individual cell lasting for several days. During this time, normal party activities would have to be suspended, not only because members were at the meeting, but also because of the stress under which they would be living.<sup>141</sup>

High procedural standards were usually unattainable. The press, again attempting to agitate for better results, reported many instances of errors, sloppy questioning and the suppression of information. Often the reason was that the party cell or its individual members were trying to shield themselves. Enthusiastic or even competent activists were precious; they could not easily be spared. 'Because of the *chistka* we'll lose all our best Communists', fretted activists in *Serp i Molot*.<sup>142</sup> An article in *Rabochaya Moskva* referred to the 'conspiracy of silence' in the cells when faced by the Control Commission investigators.<sup>143</sup> Other Communists feared or resented discussing their shortcomings in front of non-party people. To avoid this, one cell held its purge meetings in a room too small to accommodate anyone but the commission and the party activists.<sup>144</sup> Finally, individual party members resisted criticism either by withholding information or by suppressing attacks from below. In the *Mospoligraf* cell, for example, criticism of a senior figure, Krasilovskii, who was also a member of the MKK, was suppressed when he held a meeting to warn his critics that attacking him amounted to a breach of party discipline. His decision was upheld by the next cell meeting. As he put it, 'we must deal seriously with kids like that'.<sup>145</sup>

People in influential positions were more easily able to protect themselves than ordinary party members. The most powerful seem not to have been subjected to any kind of public scrutiny. A charmed circle of MK, MKK and *raikom* officials escaped exclusion. To a certain extent the MK escaped in 1929 because it had been thoroughly shaken up the previous autumn. Those who survived that, however, could expect their shortcomings to be treated with greater indulgence than those of the rank and file. The purge commissions dealing with the MK and MKK declared that five people (four from the MKK and one from the MK) were to be kept under observation as a result of misdemeanours. Three members of the MKK were removed from the checking commissions, one member of the MK was criticised for 'political illiteracy' and two people were transferred to other work.<sup>146</sup> Although the number of people affected was substantial, their punishments were relatively light compared with those meted out to rank and filers for comparable offences. MKK members suffered more than their MK colleagues. The member of the MKK who was excluded

had lied about his party *stazh*. Serious though this was in party terms, it is surprising that he was excluded while a member of the MK, who received only a reprimand, was accused of being of kulak origin and having fought with the Whites in the Civil War. Others were merely 'reprimanded' for persistent drunkenness at meetings, 'small crimes', and, in the case of one MKK member, for not knowing she had been elected to it because she had not been told by her cell and didn't read the papers. Among leading *raion* and *uezd* cadres, 1500 were checked, but only 4, or 0.3 per cent, were excluded from the party.<sup>147</sup>

The suppression of criticism during the purge, and the sparing of the MK, helped to spoil any image of 'democracy' intended in the exercise. The other disappointment was that the purge did not improve the party's social composition, and exhibited workers and peasants in a worse light than specialists and *sluzhashchie*. Although the proportion of members excluded from the Moscow party was below the national average,<sup>148</sup> more workers were excluded than employees,<sup>149</sup> thus weakening the representation of workers in the Moscow Party.<sup>150</sup> Proletarian recruitment, which was intended to accompany the removal of undesirable elements, did not compensate for the loss.

In many ways, then, the purge was a failure on its own terms. Its most important purpose – creating an atmosphere in which opposition to the new economic course would be stifled – was fulfilled, but not its secondary, but explicit, aims of improving the party's composition and overall discipline. Other means would soon be found to achieve both these ends, neither of them encouraging to 'intra-party democracy'. The accelerated proletarian recruitment which followed the purge, for example, if anything widened the gap between the elite and the rank and file by making communication between them more difficult and by blurring the distinction between party members and the 'mass' of ordinary people. Recruitment, as we have seen, also exacerbated the discipline problem. The streamlining of the party which began in 1932 with the reduction in the number of low-level cells helped to improve discipline and possibly also communications between the tiers of the party hierarchy, but its effect on political participation cannot be regarded as positive. Accompanied as it was by growing secrecy and an enhancement of the power of the appointed secretariat relative to the 'elected' (or at least more accessible) party committees, it marked the end of the period of mass rank and file involvement in political life.

What conclusions can be drawn on the basis of this evidence? First, it is clear that official rhetoric about 'intra-party democracy' was mainly a cover for political manoeuvres which had little to do with popular

control of the organs of government. The attack on the state apparatus involved popular participation, but the party leadership remained largely immune. As we have seen, this was a paradox, because the party consistently posed as the more 'democratic' body. Despite this posture, the elite remained aloof from criticism. It also remained a distinct group within the party, separated by experience, party *stazh* and material circumstances. Party campaigns were often regarded with cynicism in consequence. Popular pressure alone seldom succeeded in removing a senior party official, and the wishes of the rank and file played a minimal role in their selection. Indeed, in view of the fact that none of the MK first secretaries in this period was a Muscovite, it appears that popular pressure was deliberately ignored by a Central Committee anxious to prevent the formation of a 'Moscow bloc'.

Below the level of the elite, however, the promotion of activists to posts of local influence increased. For party activists recruited in the 1920s, campaigns like self-criticism and the purge were stepping-stones to political careers. If they could pass the test themselves, this was a period when the party elite was expanding, a period of rapid turnover among state officials, and one where successful administrators were at a premium. They could even expect protection against the worst of the 1929 purge because they were needed for the party's urgent work. Although they could not yet hope for promotion into the really senior jobs, nor expect to be able to criticise official policy or agitate for broad changes, they wielded considerable local power. Those who worked to the satisfaction of the apparatus were to form the backbone of the 'professional' shop cell *aktiv* after 1932. These people would have had a very different experience of party life from that of the disaffected oppositionist or the uncommitted rank and filer. Their power rested on the absence of central control in a wide range of areas. But it was important; rank and file activists played a major role in shaping the Stalinist 'great turn' in Moscow.

The growth of popular influence in this period, therefore, is less apparent in policies officially labelled 'intra-party democracy' than in the aspects of party life we have already considered; recruitment, the administration of industry, the gaps in official control and the acute shortage of cadres. It was not a system of 'political participation' as western scholars would define the term, lacking free elections and the possibility that citizens could choose between alternative policies. But it was a system which in this period provided its promotees with considerable access to local power and very little interference in its administration. The limits were always clear, and closed in towards the



end of the period. Cynicism was common; people knew that the elite could always have the final say. But the fact that the opportunity for activists to shape policy in Moscow did not last beyond 1932 should not fool historians into imagining that the power they wielded during the first Five Year Plan was somehow 'unreal'. The importance and responsibility of the more committed party activists, because they were very visible to ordinary people, were arguably as significant in shaping people's attitudes towards Communism and the party as were the declarations of its remoter leaders.

# Conclusion

No one at the time could have dated the establishment of the Stalinist political system to a specific month or year. The consolidation of the new order was not a logical or linear process. The streamlining of party administration, for example, followed three years of often chaotic populism. And the Soviet regime was still precarious in 1932. Although a political crisis has been averted, and the Ryutin group's leaders were in exile or behind bars, there was little cause for celebration within the leadership. The economy was in a serious and unstable condition. Despite the glossy official figures for increased production, industry lurched from crisis to crisis.<sup>1</sup> Famine loomed in the countryside.<sup>2</sup> In the cities, including relatively privileged Moscow, there were food shortages, and tense industrial relations leading to strikes and poor productivity.<sup>3</sup> Despite substantial investment, the housing crisis in Moscow, as in other major cities, continued to worsen.<sup>4</sup> Transport was in chaos.<sup>5</sup> In all, there was little to suggest that Stalin's bureaucratic system of government could last, or that he would occupy the post of party leader until his death three decades later.

Inauspicious or not, however, the establishment of the Stalinist system was one of the most significant developments in the Soviet Union's history. It is very disappointing that many details about it should remain locked in the archives of the Politburo and the apparatus of the Central Committee. It may be many years before historians can document the scope of Stalin's plans at specific turning points, his relationship with other Central Committee members and the degree to which the secret police were involved in politics before the great purge of 1937–8. But we have seen in this book that the victory of Stalinism in one local party organisation, Moscow's, can be traced through two interlocking but separate aspects of party life: the tensions within the political elite on one side, and the evolving demands of the rank and file on the other. Although our conclusions must be specific to Moscow, they may point the way for more general comments about the victory of Stalinism. Because Moscow was the capital, its politics were intimately bound up with those of the national elite. At the same time Moscow's political experience may have had a good deal in common with that of other local party organisations, especially those with large urban populations. Points which are specific to Moscow, therefore, should also help us to understand Stalin's victory at other levels.

At the beginning of this book two related aspects of Moscow's political history were raised, the victory of Stalinism and the transformation of the party as a whole. Exploring them again here, we should remember that although they were often related, these two sets of processes were not always linked. Not every change assisted the consolidation of Stalinism. The most striking change in the party as an organisation, for example, did not directly promote Stalin's victory in the short run. The massive growth in party membership between 1924 and 1932 had unpredictable consequences. In 1924 there were just over 44 500 party members in the city of Moscow among an adult population of just over one and a half million. By 1932 the Moscow city party organisation had expanded fivefold to 225 554, while the total population had just doubled (see Tables I.1 and 6.1). This expansion undoubtedly changed the party's character, but the extent to which it assisted Stalin's rise requires careful review. However familiar it may be, there is no reason to accept the Trotskyist image of a proletariat 'diluted' with bumpkins, bureaucrats and wastrels, of a party 'flooded' after 1924 with careerists and dullards. We know that a large proportion of party recruits in Moscow were not workers at all, but clerks, students and white-collar employees. As we saw earlier, it was from these groups that most of Trotsky's supporters were drawn, and later most of the Right's sympathisers. The argument that a 'genuinely' proletarian party would have held firm against Stalin does not fit the facts.

Simple judgements about the proletarian recruits' collective political allegiance, or in terms of 'Left' and 'Right', are also inappropriate. In the first place, although Moscow's workers were a class in the strict Marxist sense, they were not a coherent political group. There were certainly people who regarded themselves as 'true' proletarians – hereditary members of the city's factory workforce – but there was also a growing number of migrant labourers from outside the city, some of whom did not even come from the Moscow province. Both types of worker included people who had strong ties with a village, often including a family farm tilled for most of the year by relatives. Some were young people living singly in barracks, others were adults with families in the capital. Further divisions followed gender, skill and trade lines. Textile workers had a different outlook from their colleagues in the 'hot' shops of metalworking factories.

These divisions were significant in political terms.<sup>6</sup> The party's worker activists were not political innocents who could be manipulated easily by official pressure. Those who joined the party in the 1920s brought with them a good deal of political baggage of their own. First, they

had all lived through the revolutionary decade, and none could have failed to imbibe some of its utopian hopes and democratic rhetoric. Second, they had specific political goals, often arising from their working experience, which influenced their allegiance and behaviour as Communist Party members. Even if Stalinism was new wine, it cannot be assumed that the Lenin recruits and their successors were empty new bottles waiting to receive it. For the most part, too, their political outlook and demands were distinct from those of the leadership. The political views they held did not fit the 'Left' and 'Right' categories applied to Central Committee members. The cultural gulf between the *nomenklatura* elite and the activists on Moscow's factory floors was enormous. At times they hardly seemed to be speaking the same language.

Crucially, however, influential portions of these two diverging sections of the Moscow party came to share similar short-term goals in the summer of 1928. The intersection between the Stalinist elite and a vocal part of the factory workforce was brief. It relied on their mutual failure to specify the full implications of their thinking, especially with respect to collectivisation. But it had far-reaching effects. It was in the Moscow districts, at the lowest levels, that the call for an enquiry into the Right began, and at the grass-roots level that representatives of the Stalinist faction were selected to denounce their former Right-wing leaders. It is likely that Stalin himself would have been able to contemplate a move against the Right without this groundswell of approval.<sup>7</sup> The future was to show that grassroots party cells could easily be manipulated, and votes arranged to appear favourable to the leadership. But not all the politicians who supported him in Moscow were so cynical or so confident. Moscow's leading 'Stalinists' had not all been bribed or bullied by the General Secretary. Many, including Bauman, believed in the policies Stalin now seemed to be proposing; some had begun to express 'Stalinist' views before Stalin himself thought it politic to do so. Historians may conclude that proletarian support was not 'necessary' at this point, that the leadership was powerful enough to act alone, but at the time an explicitly proletarian mandate was valued by all who planned to take risky and unprecedented steps forward.

As we have seen, the Uglanov faction also had its followers among Moscow's party membership and in the population at large. They did not include many party members from the factories, whose interests seemed to lie with the Stalin alternative as understood in 1928. They were mainly government servants mindful of the need for political

circumspection, village-based labourers with little time for politics, peasants unaware that their support was even needed. As potential supporters for the Rightist faction they were an inarticulate and motley group whose numerical strength, superior though it probably was in the population as a whole to that of the Stalinists, could not be brought to bear on the political outcome in Moscow. They were also increasingly afraid of the consequences of speaking out. As soon as it became clear which of the two wings in the party was officially regarded as 'correct' and which was to be a 'deviation', the Stalinists' hand was strengthened. Their opponents knew what the consequences of 'opposition' were likely to be, and those who accepted the party's discipline were unwilling to step outside the majority consensus. The rank and file hostility towards 'enemies' was one of the most potent weapons in the Stalinist arsenal, and brought together groups whose political views were in other ways starkly different.

Despite this early victory, however, the coalition between the Stalinist elite and the party activists was shaky from the start. The new course constantly attracted criticism from those who had helped to begin it. Although enthusiastic about the broad goals of the socialist offensive, many party activists regarded what they saw on a daily basis with dismay. The idea of forced collectivisation was the most controversial policy, but some party activists also deplored the excessive burdens imposed by accelerated industrialisation, the persistent fudging of policy questions by officials, the failure of local leaders to respect the urgent demands of party cells, the disruption caused by the huge influx of unskilled labourers from the village. It is probable that the published sources underemphasise the extent of this grassroots criticism and that archival accounts, where dissension was recorded at virtually every meeting, convey a truer picture of the cells' political mood.

Recruitment, then, did not assist Stalin by flooding the party with uncritical supporters of the bureaucracy. But it aided his victory in other, less obvious, ways. First, whether or not they supported every aspect of official policy, the majority of party activists contributed to the economic projects associated with the new course in some way. In many cases, party membership gave an added sense of responsibility and an inducement to work harder for the cause. Despite their specific reservations, most activists remained loyal to the party as an institution, suspending their short-term criticisms in the enthusiastic expectation of better things to come. Second, the expansion at the party's lower levels made communication between elite and grass roots more difficult than it had previously been, thus exaggerating existing tendencies

towards top-level secrecy and bureaucratic, as opposed to democratic, politics.

The first of these propositions needs careful qualification. It is easy to exaggerate the extent of lower-level enthusiasm for collectivisation or rapid industrial development, especially in view of the uncritical claims made by Soviet propagandists at the time. And not every enthusiast actually helped to roll forward the economic programmes he or she supported. Party interference in the factories, for example, was often counter-productive rather than helpful. What is not in question, however, is that without the more or less committed support of thousands of party activists, the economic achievements and social transformation associated with the first Five Year Plan and the consolidation of Stalin's political position would not have been possible. More than any other resource, cadres were the commodity on which Soviet progress, and thus the fate of the nascent Stalinist system, depended. After the party's 'proletarian' phase ended, some of these activists, now training frenziedly in the city's night schools and technical institutes, would form the backbone of the next generation of technical specialists and engineers.

The second point, relating to the growth of elite power, must be seen in the light of these remarks. The separation of elite from mass began before 1925, and possibly even before 1917. Complaints that 'they', the *verkhi*, were heedless of popular demands or wrapped up in their own careerist schemes featured regularly in post-revolutionary party life. Before 1925, however, the party's small size permitted a sense of elitism to pervade all levels of its membership, and also made the transfer of information easier. The larger the party became, the easier it was for the lower levels to merge with the non-party mass and the more difficult effective consultation, even if the leadership had desired it, appeared to be.<sup>8</sup> Even during the cultural revolution, when members of the rank and file who did not hold party offices had considerable influence over local affairs, the availability of information about the elite's activities, and the representation of ordinary people on high-level party bodies were being eroded. Politics in the localities may have been susceptible to local pressures, but overall the decision-making power of the Stalinist party elite was increasing. As the economic crisis deepened from 1931, this elite began to voice doubts about the desirability of rank and file initiatives, pointing to the activists' 'lack of responsibility', their lack of expertise and the parallelism involved in the many-tiered system. 'Proletarian' policies lost their credibility, scapegoated for the failures of teleological economic planning. From 1931, the establishment of an

alternative form of party administration, albeit largely staffed by the most loyal of the former party activists, was a relatively easy matter.

Its growing power and secrecy did not mean that the elite became isolated from all outside pressure during our period. The published sources tend to suggest that all decisions were ultimately taken by the party leadership, but this image may be misleading. While it is not difficult to find cases of apparent arbitrariness, the effectiveness of outside pressure is much harder to demonstrate, but in some cases no other explanation for the eventual outcome will do. Clearly the policies available to the political leadership were limited by economic and to some extent social constraints. NEP was introduced as a result of general pressures, markets were reintroduced after collectivisation for similar reasons. In general, however, major strategic decisions were handed down from the Politburo to local organisations with little concession to objective circumstances. In Moscow's case, central intervention was a feature of daily life. The MK's leaders could expect telephone calls from Stalin's office at any time, and might be asked to attend to anything from major policy matters to small details of city architecture. It was at the next stage, implementation, that the modifications began.

Although there was a clear pyramid of power in Moscow, all levels participated in this modification. Moreover, it was possible for levels to be skipped, or for appeals from below to overturn the decision of a higher party organ. The effect could be chaotic; rational policies were overturned in favour of symbolic concessions to popular feeling (as in the case of the refurbishment of *Serp i Molot*), impractical official measures could be softened in practice to a point where they had little or no impact (as in the case of promotion policy). Vague official directives were sometimes deliberately left for local interpretation. Stalin's interests were well-served if local officials could be blamed for 'dizziness with success'; in other words, for carrying out a vaguely-worded policy with the brutality which in fact it logically demanded. But directives were also left unfinished because the leadership was not able to think them through. Imprecision arising from the absence of an official policy, or from a lack of practical forethought, was often responsible for the local officials' and party activists' relative freedom of initiative during rapid industrialisation.<sup>9</sup> The shaping of the Stalinist economy, even in the capital, was not exclusively the work of senior party politicians.

More controversial is the question of how far party members in general contributed to the formation of the authoritarian Stalinist

political system. It was one thing to support Stalin's vaguely-worded economic policies in 1928, another to assent to the repressive political measures which accompanied them. Part of the answer is that this aspect of the Stalinist system evolved gradually. There was never a moment when the Bolshevik Party was libertarian, and its tendencies towards strict internal discipline were encouraged by the difficult circumstances it faced (partly of its own creation) from the seizure of power onwards. New restrictions and tougher penalties were added incrementally, so that it was difficult to say at which stage the full implications of the system became clear. New measures were generally consensual. No one was prepared to insist on the need for the broad discussion of policy alternatives, still less for any kind of pluralism. And each opposition defeat brought forth stronger anathemas from the surviving faithful. Every aspect of the accuseds' behaviour was condemned, every plank of their platform.

National politicians such as Zinoviev, Trotsky and Bukharin were as deeply implicated in this process of escalation as was Stalin. As one observer remarked of the clash between Trotsky and Zinoviev, 'This experiment cost each his life, for both died by the same arm. It was an arm which neither of them refused to use against the others, though employed to a different degree and for not exactly the same purpose'.<sup>10</sup> Moscow's party leaders also encouraged their colleagues in the Politburo to add to the party's repressive arsenal in the 1920s, little suspecting that the new weapons might later be turned against them.<sup>11</sup> On only one measure was Stalin virtually isolated before 1934. His demand that Ryutin be executed in 1932 was resisted by his colleagues.<sup>12</sup> The execution of leading Bolsheviks became possible only in the different political context which followed Kirov's assassination and the Moscow trials. Political murder on the scale of the later 1930s could not have been contemplated by party members before 1934. It was to be the hallmark of Stalin's personal ascendancy, although it was possible only because of the history of repression and intolerance which had preceded it.

Many lower-level activists broadly shared the elite's values when it came to discipline. The main difference was that they had less information about the alleged 'crimes' of their former leaders. It is debatable how much more questioning they might have been if they had known every detail of the elite struggle. The sudden fall from grace of a respected revolutionary leader often caused consternation and even sorrow. But in the end the demand for unity in the face of problems at home and abroad would bring round the waverers. The party activists



in Krasnyi Proletarii and Serp i Molot had their eyes firmly fixed on the goal of socialism, and any deviation from that path, however caused, appeared to them as a betrayal. There were echoes of the Civil War mentality in their calls for a collective assault on class enemies.

There were also more immediate influences reinforcing strict party discipline. An atmosphere in which mistakes were caused by 'wreckers', where political dissidents became 'enemies' and small traders 'rotten bourgeois elements' had a tendency to self-reinforcement.<sup>13</sup> The very brutality of the economic changes in the first Five Year Plan affected people's responses to political campaigns. Although many factory workers in Moscow knew more about the villages than their party leaders, especially if they had relatives in the countryside, it was difficult to sustain a benign view of alleged 'kulaks' after reading comrades' accounts of Communists murdered in their work of bringing socialism to the peasantry. Even in the factories, harsh conditions including horrifying industrial accidents were a reminder that class enemies would stop at nothing, not even at mass murder, to overturn the Five Year Plan.<sup>14</sup> Activists' earlier lives had not conditioned them for compassion towards people whom they regarded as traitors, especially well-to-do ones. Pre-revolutionary Russia was no place in which to be poor. The war, Revolution and Civil War plunged Moscow's population into a decade of unprecedented hardship. All Muscovites, especially those exposed to party education, were encouraged to see the world in terms of the struggle to the death of progress against reaction. During the Civil War they had learned directly that the defeat of the Revolution would see them all imprisoned, if not tortured and lynched. Even if they had doubts about some aspects of the elite's policies, the logic that traitors should be put to death would have been hard to resist.

All this helps to explain why thousands of ordinary Muscovites were implicated in the increasing official violence of Stalin's regime. There is no escaping this conclusion. Moscow's streets were thronged in 1930 with people calling for the death penalty for the 'wreckers' of the 'Industrial Party'.<sup>15</sup> These demonstrations were cathartic; workers' frustration about their lives' relentless hardship found expression in vicious ritual attacks on those popularly believed to be responsible. Soviet historians in repentant mood may find material here for a story of collective national guilt. Those who wish to leave the blame exclusively with the elite can still point out with justice that not everyone who joined the demonstrators agreed wholeheartedly with their demands. It was generally a good idea to be seen to be participating in rituals of this kind, and some careerist party members no doubt did

so to earn credits from their superiors. But the enthusiasm of party activists on occasions like this cannot all be dismissed as play-acting.

If Soviet historians, for political or personal reasons, need to examine the question of guilt and repentance, however, Western historians do not. It is important to understand how the uglier features of Stalinism became possible, and we should not be surprised that the process involved some interaction between the elite and the politically-active section of the mass. This finding does not 'absolve the leadership of responsibility for mass murder'.<sup>16</sup> Collectivisation, which involved mass murder through famine and deportation, was initiated by the party leadership. There were also individual crimes, including theft and murder, committed by party plenipotentiaries and even peasants, but broadly the responsibility lies with the Stalinist political elite. As for the Moscow crowd, calling for the execution of Ramzin and his friends in December 1930, the crucial point is that there was no other outlet for its anger about the economic and political situation. Unless people wanted to turn their backs on the Revolution altogether, they had no choice but to believe in the Bolsheviks. There were no other political parties. The only realistic alternative to Bolshevik rule was foreign intervention. Changing social configurations left people uncertain where to look for allies at any level. Although members of the political elite continued to regard the popular mood with apprehension, the price of resistance was by this stage too great for most ordinary people to contemplate. The stronger the state became, the less realistic appeared opposition, even on a personal level, to its policies. Turning back was unthinkable, and the present was grim. The only alternative was to stay with the leadership and wait for things to get better. 'You become an accomplice even though you are an adversary', remarked one former Bolshevik, 'since you are unable to express disapproval even if you are ready to pay with your life'.<sup>17</sup>

These grand questions of life and death have come to overshadow the political analysis of the Stalin period for obvious reasons. Although they must be addressed directly, however, it would be misleading to leave the Moscow party in 1932 with this foretaste of future terror. It was not this aspect of party life which dominated the period of political consolidation. Moscow's party officials and activists spent most of their time worrying about local problems. While Stalin gathered his friends around him, storing away the failings of each for future use, most ordinary members of his party were preoccupied with finding a new propagandist for the latest crop of recruits, putting the best interpre-

tation on another disappointing set of output figures, trying to avoid deployment to the most unproductive night shift. More time and creativity went into overcoming production difficulties between 1928 and 1932 than were ever spent on grand political problems.

Activists were fascinated by high politics, but they were not given much opportunity to talk about them. No occasion was offered to discuss the leadership's broad political record. 'Report meetings' did not in practice invite criticism of central policy, although in theory they should have allowed it. At a time when some of the most far-reaching political events in twentieth-century history were taking place, party officials were concerned that meetings were 'boring', 'formal' and poorly-attended. The party's activists were overburdened with 'concrete' issues, 'the minute details of life', while a political system took shape around them, often with their active collusion, whose finished outlines would have been unthinkable in 1917 or even 1921. Many had reservations about current political developments, but there were few opportunities to explore them and pressing incentives to get on with more practical problems. As they saw it, after all, socialism was just around the next corner. When it came, repression, and even perhaps the party itself, would be unnecessary. The bloodshed would cease just as the economic hardships would give way to plenty. Meanwhile, most of Moscow's ordinary party members accepted Bolshevik discipline in principle while in their own lives they attempted to bring the good times nearer however they could.

# Appendix 1:

## Composition of the MK Buro, 1925–32<sup>1</sup>

MK BURO ON 13 AUGUST 1924<sup>2</sup>

*Secretaries:*

Zelenskii, I.A. (first secretary)  
Uglanov, N.A. (new second secretary)  
Mikhailov, V.M. (third secretary)

*Buro members:*

Zelenskii  
Uglanov (new)  
Mikhailov  
Kamenev, L.B. (chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
Kotov, V.A. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
Zakharov (secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*)  
Belen'kii (new secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)  
Mel'nichanskii  
Burtsev  
Bumazhnyi  
Karavai, M.M. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)

*Candidates:*

Rogov, M.I. (*Mossoviet*)  
Tsikhon, A.M. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
Petrukhin  
Drozhzhin, I.V. (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)  
Pavlov (MGSPS)

MK BURO ELECTED AFTER THE THIRTEENTH MOSCOW PARTY CONFERENCE, JANUARY 1925<sup>3</sup>

*Secretariat:*

Uglanov, N.A. (first secretary)  
Kotov, V.A. (new second secretary. Was secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
Bauman, K.Ya. (head of *orgraspredotdel*)

Knorin, V.G. (head of *agitpropotdel*)  
Mikhailov, V.M. (chairman of MGSPS)

*Buro members:*

Kamenev, L.B. (chairman of Mossoviet)  
Uglov  
Mikhailov  
Kotov  
Bauman  
Knorin  
Voroshilov, K.E. (MVO)  
Belen'kii (secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)  
Karavai, M.M. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)  
Tsikhon, A.M. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
Rogov, M.I. (Mossoviet)

*Candidates:*

Drozhzhin, I.V. (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)  
Ukhanov, K.V. (chairman of *Elektrotrest*)  
Ovshin  
Giber, B.V. (new secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)

**MK BURO ELECTED AFTER THE FOURTEENTH MOSCOW  
PARTY CONFERENCE, DECEMBER 1925<sup>4</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Uglov, N.A. (first secretary)  
Kotov, V.A. (second secretary)  
Mikhailov, V.M. (chairman of MGSPS)  
Bauman, K.Ya. (head of *orgraspredotdel*)  
Knorin, V.G. (head of *agitpropotdel*) and MK  
representative to Moscow Komsomol)

*Buro members:*

Uglov  
Kotov  
Bauman  
Knorin  
Mikhailov  
Kamenev, L.B. (chairman of Mossoviet)  
Rogov, M.I. (Mossoviet)  
Ukhanov, K.V. (chairman of *Elektrotrest*)

- Ryutin, M.N. (new secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*.  
Replaces Belen'kii)
- Kulikov, E.F. (new secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*.  
Replaces Karavai, M.M.)
- Polonskii, V.I. (new secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*.  
From Nizhnyi-Novgorod *gubkom* buro. Appointed to Moscow  
post in February)
- Tsikhon, A.M. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)
- Giber, V.V. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)
- Yurevich, E.I. (new secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*.  
Replaces Drozhzhin, who was promoted to post of TsK  
instructor)
- Bulin, A.S. (political department of MVO)

*Candidates:*

- Gorshin, I.V. (secretary of Orekhovo-Zuevo *ukom*)
- Lyubimov, I.I.
- Lobanov, S.G. (secretary of Moskovskii *ukom*)
- Pen'kov, M.A. (secretary of Bogorod *ukom*)
- Mandel'shtam, N.N. (head of *guberniya* committee on *shefstvo*)
- Matveev, D.I. (Moscow Komsomol)

**3 APRIL 1926 MK PLENUM<sup>5</sup>**

Kamenev, L.B., replaced as chairman of *Mossoviet* by Ukhanov, K.V., hitherto chairman of *Elektrotrest*.

**MK BURO ELECTED AFTER FIFTEENTH MOSCOW PARTY  
CONFERENCE, JANUARY 1927<sup>6</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

- Uglanov, N.A. (first secretary)
- Kotov, V.A. (second secretary)
- Bauman, K.Ya. (chairman of *orgotdel*)
- Mikhailov, V.M. (Chairman of MGSPS)
- Mandel'shtam, N.N. (new head of *agitpropotdel*. Was head of *guberniya*  
committee on *shefstvo*)

*Buro members:*

- Uglanov
- Kotov
- Bauman

Ukhanov, K.V. (Chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
 Mikhailov, V.M.  
 Mandel'shtam  
 Rogov, M.I. (*Mossoviet*)  
 Bulin, A.S. (political department of MVO)  
 Strievskii, K.K. (chairman of MSNKh)  
 Yagoda, G.G. (OGPU)  
 Ryutin, M.N. (secretary of *Krasnaya Presnya raikom*)  
 Kulikov, E.F. (secretary of *Zamoskvorech'e raikom*)  
 Polonskii, V.I. (secretary of *Rogozhsko-Simonovskii raikom*)  
 Tsikhon, A.M. (secretary of *Bauman raikom*)  
 Giber, B.V. (secretary of *Sokol'niki raikom*)  
 Yakovlev, V.A. (secretary of *Khamovniki raikom*-new.  
     Replaces Yurevich, E.I.)  
 Pen'kov, M.A. (secretary of *Bogorod ukom*)

*Candidates:*

Markov, A.T. (new chairman of *guberniya otdel* of textile workers)  
 Uryvaev, M.E. (new chairman of *avtotrest*)  
 Berzin, Yu.P. (new secretary of *Orekhovo-Zuevo ukom*)  
 Verbitskii, K.V. (new-MSPO)  
 Sofronov, P.P. (new secretary of *Moskovskii ukom*)  
 Baikova, O.L. (new head of women's department)  
 Ivanova, M.A. (new representative from *Dukat factory*)

**MK BURO ELECTED AFTER SIXTEENTH MOSCOW PARTY  
 CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 1927<sup>7</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Uglanov, N.A. (first secretary)  
 Kotov, V.A. (second secretary)  
 Mandel'shtam, N.N. (head of *agitpropotdel*)  
 Bauman, K.Ya. (head of *orgotdel*)  
 Mikhailov, V.M. (chairman of MGSPS)

*Buro:*

Uglanov  
 Kotov  
 Bauman  
 Mandel'shtam  
 Mikhailov, V.M.  
 Ukhanov (chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
 Rogov, M.I. (*Mossoviet*)

Bulin, A.S. (political department of MVO)  
 Strievskii, K.K. (chairman of MSNKh)  
 Yagoda, G.G. (OGPU)  
 Ryutin, M.N. (secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)  
 Kulikov, E.F. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)  
 Polonskii, V.I. (secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*)  
 Tsikhon, A.M. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
 Giber, B.V. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
 Yakoviev, V.A. (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)  
 Pen'kov, M.A. (secretary of Bogorod *ukom*)

*Candidates:*

Markov, A.T. (secretary of *gubotdel* of textile workers)  
 Berzin, Yu. P. (secretary of Orekhovo-Zuevo *ukom*)  
 Sofronov, P.P. (secretary of Moskovskii *ukom*)  
 Verbitskii, K.B. (MSPO)  
 Baikova, O.I. (head of women's department)  
 Busarev, N.M. (secretary of Kolomenskoe *ukom*)  
 Kosarev (secretary of Moscow Komsomol)

9 MAY 1928<sup>8</sup>

Polonskii replaces Bauman as head of *orgraspredotdel*.  
 (Bauman promoted to Central Committee rural department.)  
 Pen'kov replaces Polonskii as secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*.

## 18 OCTOBER 1928 JOINT PLENUM OF MK AND MKK

Mandel'shtam, Ryutin and Pen'kov removed from their posts.  
 Mandel'shtam replaced as head of *agitpropotdel* by Popov, N.N.

At subsequent plenums of *raion* committees:

Ryutin replaced as secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* by Leonov, F.G.<sup>9</sup>  
 Pen'kov replaced as secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom* by Davidson, P.E.<sup>10</sup>

## MK PLENUM OF NOVEMBER 1928<sup>11</sup>

Uglanov removed from post as first secretary and replaced by Molotov, V.M.  
 Kotov replaced as second secretary by Bauman, K.Ya.  
 Baikova replaced as head of women's department by Goreva, E.G.  
 Kulikov replaced as secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom* by Ryabov, A.N.



Yakovlev replaced as secretary of Khamovniki *raikom* by Fin'kovskii.  
Sofronov replaced as secretary of Moskovskii *ukom* by Gordienko, I.M.  
Kulikov, Yakovlev, Baikova, Busarev, Berzin, Sofronov, Kotov and Uglanov removed from MK.  
Leonov, Ryabov, Fin'kovskii, Davidson, Volodin (PUOKR), Gordienko and Goreva co-opted on to MK.

New MK Buro of November 1928:<sup>12</sup>

*Secretaries:*

Molotov, V.M. (new first secretary)

Bauman, K. Ya. (new second secretary)

*Buro:*

Tsifrinovich, V.E. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)

Leonov, F.G. (Secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)

Ryabov, A.N. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)

Fin'kovskii (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)

Davidson, P.E. (secretary of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii *raikom*)

Volodin, V.G. (PUOKR)

*Candidates:*

Gordienko, I.M. (secretary of Moskovskii *ukom*)

Goreva, E.G. (head of women's department)

Lyubasov (head of rural department)

## **MK BURO ELECTED AFTER SEVENTEENTH MOSCOW PARTY CONFERENCE, APRIL 1929<sup>13</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Bauman, K. Ya. (new first secretary; replaces Molotov)

Polonskii, V.I. (new second secretary)

Leonov, F.G. (new third secretary)

*Buro:*

Bulat, I.L. (new head of *orgaspredotdel*. Was secretary of Tula *gubkom*)

Bauman

Polonskii

Mikhailov, V.M. (chairman of MGSPS)

Popov, N.N. (head of *agitpropotdel*)

Goreva, E.G. (head of women's department)

Leonov

Nosov (secretary of Tver' *gubkom*)

Timofeev (secretary of Ryazan' *gubkom*)

Korostelev (MKK)  
Zaitsev, P.E.  
Volkov, P.Ya (*Mossoviet*)  
Vasil'ev (Moscow Komsomol)  
Yagoda, G.G. (OGPU)  
Volodin, V.G. (Head of PUOKR)  
Ryabov, A.N. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)  
Giber, V.V. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
secretary of Kaluga *okruzhkom* (ex-officio)

#### MK PLENUM, JUNE 1929<sup>14</sup>

Mikhailov removed from post of chairman of MGSPS, and also from MK and MK buro  
Replaced by Strievskii, K. K., hitherto chairman of MSNKh  
Zaitsev, P.E. appointed to head rural department and becomes candidate to MK secretariat  
Goreva, E.G. becomes full member of MK secretariat  
Kozlov, I.I., hitherto head of the Krasnaya Presnya *orgotdel*, replaces the promoted Leonov as secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, and is co-opted on to MK buro  
Palkina, replacing Giber as secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*, becomes full member of MK buro

#### BURO OF MOSCOW *OBLAST'* COMMITTEE (MOK) AFTER FIRST *OBLAST'* CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 1929<sup>15</sup>

##### *Secretariat:*

Bauman, K.Ya. (first secretary)  
Polonskii, V.I. (second secretary)  
Leonov, F.G. (third secretary)

##### *Candidates:*

Goreva, E.G. (head of women's department)  
Zaitsev, P.E. (head of rural department since June 1929)

##### *Buro:*

Bauman  
Polonskii  
Leonov  
Ukhanov, K.V. (chairman of Mossoviet)  
Strievskii, K.K. (chairman of MGSPS)  
Yagoda, G.G. (OGPU)

Bulat, I.L. (head of *orgotdel*)  
 Kogan, E.S. (head of *agitpropotdel*)  
 Goreva, E.G. (head of women's department)  
 Zaitsev  
 Volodin, V.G. (head of PUOKR)  
 Volkov, P.Ya. (chairman of MSNKh)  
 Gordienko, I.M. (new chairman of *oblast'* union of metalworkers. Was secretary of Moskovskii *ukom*)  
 Markov, A.T. (chairman of *oblast'* union of textile workers)  
 Kozlov, I.I. (secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)  
 Ryabov, A.N. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)  
 Shirin, A.P. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
 Davidson, P.E. (secretary of Proletarskii *raikom*)  
 Mikhailevskii, I.V. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
 Finkovskii (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)  
 Nosov (secretary of Moskovskii *okruzhkom*)  
 Granovskii  
 Kalygina (secretary of Tver' *okruzhkom*)  
 Timofeev (secretary of Ryazan' *okruzhkom*)  
 Lyubasov (secretary of Orekhovo-Zuevo *okruzhkom*)  
 Laz'yan (secretary of Kolomenskoe *okruzhkom*)  
 Makarov (secretary of Serpukhov *okruzhkom*)

*Candidates:*

Khlopyankin, N.I. (deputy chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
 Blinov (Zvenigorod)  
 Koz'min  
 Cherkasov  
 Sorokin, P.S. (MSPO)  
 Chemodanov (secretary of Moscow Komsomol)

JOINT MOK AND MKK PLENUM, JANUARY 1930<sup>16</sup>

Polonskii transferred to work in VTsSPS, and removed from post as second secretary of MK.

Fin'kovskii removed from post as secretary of Khamovniki *raikom* and replaced by Kronberg, who is co-opted on to MK.

MOK BURO AFTER SECOND *OBLAST'* CONFERENCE,  
 JUNE 1930<sup>17</sup>

*Secretariat:*

Kaganovich, L.M. (new first secretary; replaced Bauman after the latter's removal in April 1930)

Leonov, F.G. (new second secretary. Promoted when Polonskii moved to TsK. Was third secretary.)

Ryndin, K.V. (new third secretary. Head of organisation-instruction section)

Ukhanov, K.V. (chairman of Mossoviet)

Strievskii, K.K. (chairman of MGSPS)

*Buro:*

Kaganovich

Leonov

Ryndin

Ukhanov

Strievskii

Volkov

Kogan, E.S. (head of *kul'tprop* section)

Ruben, R.G. (head of *agitmass* section)

Nosov (MOSPS)

Bel'skii

Ryabov, A.N. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)

Kozlov, I.I. (secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)

Davidson, P.E. (secretary of Proletarskii *raikom*)

Sedel'nikov, A.I.

Kalygina, A.S.

*Candidates:*

Volodin

Shirin, A.P. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)

Kronberg (secretary of Khamovniki *raikom*)

Mikhailevskii, I.V. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)

Goreva, E.V.

Gordienko

Makarov (head of cadres section)

Khlopyankin, N.I.

Arutyunants, P.G.

Chemodanov (secretary of Moscow Komsomol)

## MOK PLENUM, JULY 1930<sup>18</sup>

Leonov promoted to secretary of TsK *orgburo*, and replaced as second MK secretary by Ryndin, K.V., hitherto third secretary and head of *orgotdel* of MK. Kaminskii, hitherto head of TsK *agitmass* section, replaces him as third secretary and head of *orgotdel*.

Strievskii appointed to MOSPS.

Nosov (MOSPS) becomes a member of the MK secretariat.

Ryabov removed from post as secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom* for incompetence and replaced by Filatov, hitherto secretary of the Serp i Molot factory committee.

**BURO OF MOSCOW CITY COMMITTEE (*GORKOM*) ELECTED  
AFTER EXTRAORDINARY PLENUM OF MOK AND MKK,  
FEBRUARY 1931<sup>19</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Kaganovich, L.M. (first secretary)  
Ryndin, K.V. (second secretary)  
Gikalo (secretary of Moscow *gorkom*)  
Kogan, E.S. (secretary of Moscow *gorkom*)  
Bulganin, N.A. (chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
Il'in, I.L. (head of organisation-instruction section)  
Fedoseev (head of *kul'tprop* section)  
Erogov, M. (head of *agitmass* section)

*Buro:*

Kaganovich  
Ryndin  
Gikalo  
Kogan  
Bulganin  
Kozlov, I.I. (secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*)  
Filatov (secretary of Leninskii *raikom*)  
Ruben, R.G. (secretary of Frunze *raikom*)  
Trofimov (secretary of Stalin *raikom*)  
Egorov, V.G. (secretary of Oktyabr' *raikom*)  
Bessonov  
Kul'kov, M.M. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)  
Soifer (secretary of Dzerzhinskii *raikom*)  
Gaidul', I.P. (secretary of Proletarskii *raikom*)  
Khrushchev, N.S. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)

*Candidates:*

Voropaev, F.G.  
Il'in, I.L.  
Fedoseev  
Petrosyan  
Samoshkin  
Shurov  
Artemenko

**MOK ELECTED AFTER THIRD MOSCOW OBLAST'  
CONFERENCE, JANUARY 1932<sup>20</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Kaganovich (first secretary)  
Ryndin (second secretary)  
Gei, K.V.  
Mikhailov, M.E.  
Erogov, M.  
Donenko, V.A.

*Buro:*

Kaganovich  
Ryndin  
Kaminskii  
Gei  
Mikhailov  
Donenko  
Erogov, M.  
Agranov, Ya.S. (OGPU)  
Drozhzhin, I.V. (MOSPS)  
Kalygina, A.S. (secretary of Kalinin *gorkom*)  
Sedel'nikov, A.I. (secretary of Tula *gorkom*)  
Veklichev, G.I. (PUOKR)  
Ruben, R.G. (secretary of Frunze *raikom*)  
Khrushchev, N.S. (new secretary of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*; was secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
Bulganin, N.A.  
Kogan, E.S. (MGK)  
Davidson, P.E. (MGSPS)  
Malenkov, G.M.

*Candidates:*

Luk'yanov, D.D. (Moscow Komsomol)  
Kuchmin, I.F. (deputy chairman of Moscow *oblispolkom*)  
Voropaev, F.G. (chairman of *Oblast'* machine builders' union)  
Dubyna, T.M. (Institute of Red Professors)  
Rumyantsev, G.K. (TsKK)  
Apasov, N.I. (secretary of Podol'sk *gorkom*)  
Shurov, V.Ya. (secretary of Orekhovo-Zuevo *raikom*)  
Andreev, S.Ya. (secretary of Serpukhov *gorkom*)  
Arutyunyants, P.G. (Bobrikovskoe stroitel'stvo)

**MGK BURO ELECTED AFTER SECOND CITY CONFERENCE,  
JANUARY 1932<sup>21</sup>**

*Secretariat:*

Kaganovich (first secretary)  
Khrushchev (second secretary)  
Ruben, R.G. (secretary of Frunze *raikom*)  
Kogan, E.S.  
Davidson, P.E. (MGSPS)  
Voropaev, F.G. (chairman of *Oblast'* machine builders' union)

*Buro:*

Kaganovich  
Khrushchev  
Ruben  
Kogan  
Davidson  
Voropaev  
Bulganin, N.A. (chairman of *Mossoviet*)  
Soifer (secretary of Dzerzhinskii *raikom*)  
Margolin, N.V. (secretary of Bauman *raikom*)  
Badaev, A.E. (chairman of MSPO)  
Gaidul', I.P. (secretary of Proletarskii *raikom*)  
Trofimov (chairman of *Oblast'* union of cotton textile workers)  
Starostin, K.F. (secretary of Sokol'niki *raikom*)  
Kul'kov, M.M. (secretary of Zamoskvorech'e *raikom*)

*Candidates:*

Il'in, I.L.  
Drizul, A. Ya.  
Angarov (Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute)  
Ratner (Economic Department of the Institute of Red Professors)  
Khveshin, T.S. (deputy chairman of *Mossoviet*)

# Appendix 2: Work Plans of the MK Plenum and MK Buro, April–September 1929<sup>1</sup>

## a) PLAN OF WORK FOR MK PLENUM

1. Resolutions of the Sixteenth Party Conference and Central Committee plenum–May. (Plenum of MK together with *aktiv.*)
2. MK work plan–May. (Report by Comrade Bauman.)
3. On the state of procurements in Moscow and the *guberniya*–May. (MSPO and the *guberniya* trade department.)
4. On the progress of the spring sowing campaign–May. (Communist fraction of the *guberniya ispolkom* with co-report by RKI.)
5. Questions regarding the organisation of the *oblast'* and the *raions*–May. (Communist fraction of Mossoviet.)
6. Rationalisation of industry controlled by MSNKh and the lowering of costs–July. (Report by MSNKh and co-report by MRKI.)
7. On the condition of the textile industry and lowering of its costs–July. (Report by VTS and *gubotdel* of textile workers.)
8. Measures for raising the productivity of labour and involving workers in the construction of industry–July. (Report by MGSPS and RKI.)
9. Results of the transfer of enterprises to a seven-hour working day and further prospects–August. (MSNKh and co-report by MGSPS.)
10. On the Five Year Plan for the Moscow Industrial Region–August. (Report by the Communist fraction of Mossoviet.)
11. The material and cultural condition of Moscow workers (composition, wages and budget, housing, unemployment, cultural level, etc.)–August. (MGSPS, co-reports from MSNKh and RKI.)
12. On the course of the party purge–August. (MKK.)
13. Report on the Komsomol–August.
14. The purge of the Soviet apparatus, promotions and the struggle against bureaucratism–September. (Report by RKI and *orgraspred.*)
15. Measures for accelerating the improvement in agriculture and the rate of collectivisation–September. (Rural department–*otdel po rabote v derevne.*)
16. Recruitment of workers into the party–September. (Report by *orgraspredotdel.*)
17. Mass anti-religious work–September. (Report by *agitpropotdel.*)



18. Work among women workers and peasants–September. (Women's department.)

## **b) PLAN OF WORK FOR THE MK BURO**

### **Industrial and construction questions**

1. Progress of work in industry controlled by MSNKh towards rationalisation and the lowering of costs. (Report by MSNKh, co-report by RKI–April.)
2. The condition of the textile industry in the Moscow *guberniya* from the point of view of the lowering of costs, the rationalisation of production and the raising of labour productivity. (Report by VTS and the *guberniya otдел* of textile workers–April.)
3. On the progress of work for mobilising the internal resources of MSNKh industry. (Report by MSNKh–May.)
4. New construction of industrial enterprises, the reconstruction and specialisation of enterprises, use of new equipment. (Report by MSNKh and RKI–May.)
5. Prospects and tasks for the procurement of raw materials for industry in the Moscow *guberniya* in the second half of the year. (Report by *Gubplan* and MSNKh–April–May.)
6. On the Five Year Plan for the development of industry in the Moscow industrial region. (Report by *Gubplan*–June.)
7. Report by Gomza and Kolomenskoe factories. (May.)
8. Report by Avtotrest and AMO factory. (April.)
9. On the construction of an instruments factory.
10. Report by Aniltrest.
11. On the work and concentration of the printing industry. (Report by Mospoligraf–June.)
12. Results of the transfer of factories to a seven-hour working day in 1928/9 and on the transfer to a seven-hour working day in 1929/30. (Report by MGSPS–August.)
13. Preliminary results of rationalisation and the lowering of costs in construction. (Report by *Mosstroï* (Moscow construction), co-report by RKI–September.)
14. On the execution of directives on the strengthening of *edinonachalie* in the administration of enterprises. (Report by RKI and MSNKh–July.)
15. The condition and training of industrial cadres. (Report by *orgaspred*, co-report by MSNKh–July.)
16. Participation of trade unions in improving production disciplines and lowering costs. (Report by MGSPS–April.)
17. Results of production conferences and investigation into production meetings. (Report by MGSPS and one production meeting from each of two large enterprises–May.)

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18. Results of conclusion of collective agreements, review of piece-rate norms and state of production discipline. (Report by MGSPS–June.)
19. On the plan and control figures for wages and labour productivity in 1929/30 and on conclusion of collective agreements for 1929. (Report by MGSPS–September.)
20. Industrial training and the education of workers (Report by *agitprop*, *kul'totdel* of MGSPS, co-report by *tekhmass*–July–August.)
21. Preliminary results of workers' competition. (September.)
22. On the condition of the proletariat in the Moscow *Guberniya*. (Report by *orgaspred*, MGSPS and *gubstat* (statistics) *otdel*–August.)

### **Questions concerning the development and socialist reconstruction of agriculture**

23. Results of the spring sowing campaign from the point of view of expanding the sown area, carrying out the agrominimum and broadening production co-operatives. (Report by department for work in the countryside, co-report by *zemotdel*–July.)
24. On current tasks and the prospects for technical assistance in developing agriculture in the Moscow *guberniya* (introduction of mechanical technology, mineral fertilisers, etc.). (Report by *gubplan*–July.)
25. On the results of measures for increasing crop capacity. (Report by *zemotdel*–September.)
26. Results of spring and tasks of autumn contracting, the development of long term contracting and preliminary results of contracting outside *guberniya* in Moscow industrial region. (Report by *Mossel'kredsoyuz* (agricultural credit union), co-report by MSPO–June.)
27. Measures for increasing the tempo of formation of production co-operatives and collectivisation. (Report by *otdel* for work in the countryside and *Kolkhozsentr*–July.)
28. Report on condition and prospects of *sovkhoz* construction. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet and *Gubsel'sindikat*)
29. On the agricultural tax. (Report by fraction of *Gubispolkom*–April.)
30. Report by *Mossel'kredsoyuz* on progress of fulfilment of agricultural credit plan (from the point of view of productive effect and class line–September)
31. Development of market gardening and the process of its collectivisation. (Report by *zemotdel*–August.)
32. Participation of party, komsomol, soviet and co-operative organisations in involvement of peasant *aktiv* in the socialist reconstruction of agriculture. (Report by *otdel* for work in the countryside, one *volost'* party and one komsomol organization–August.)
33. Help from industrial workers in development and socialist reconstruction of the countryside. (Report by *shestvo* society and *otdel* for work in the countryside–August.)
34. On the composition and training of agricultural cadres (agricultural VUZy, technical schools, courses, etc.). (Report by Commission of the MK–June.)

35. On the Five Year Plan for agriculture in the Moscow Industrial Region (Report by *Gubplan*–June)

#### **Trade and Co-operatives**

36. On the condition of procurements in Moscow and the *guberniya* (Report by MSPO, trade *otdel*–May)
37. Results of the work of procurement co-operatives in the first half-year and price policy for the second half-year. (Report by MSPO–May)
38. On regulation of the private market. (Report by *gubotdel* on trade–April)
39. Organisational questions for the procurement co-operatives (the co-operative *aktiv* and the links of co-operatives with enterprises, MTsKR, etc.). (Report by MSPO and *orgraspred*–June.)
40. On the progress of capital construction in the procurement co-operatives. (Report by MSPO–July.)
41. Broadening of products of handicraft co-operatives and the process of further collectivisation (results of first half-year and prospects). (Report by *Gubplan*, handicraft co-operatives–June.)

#### **The material condition of the working class**

42. Condition of real wages in first half-year and prospects. (Report by MGSPS–May.)
43. Questions of unemployment and the struggle against it, especially among women and youths. (Report by MGSPS, labour department and Moscow Komsomol–May.)
44. Provision of workers with rest homes, health resorts, organisations for using summer holidays. (Report by MGSPS, *Moszdrav*–April.)
45. Condition and tasks of social and material services for workers, especially from the point of view of liberating women from housework (socialised provision of meals, laundries, results of cultural–material campaign, etc.). (Report by women's department–May.)
46. Measures for alleviating the housing needs of workers, new housing construction, organisation of hostels, eviction of non-working elements. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet–July.)

#### **Questions of soviet construction**

47. Results of Mossoviet elections. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet and *orgraspred*–April)
48. Questions concerning the *guberniya* Congress of Soviets. (April.)
49. Questions concerning the division of the *oblast'* into regions. (April–May.)
50. On the communal loan and the construction projects based on it. (Report by Mossoviet–April.)

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51. Results of use of Moscow *Gubispolkom* budget in the first half-year. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet–May.)
52. Directives on the control figures for 1929/30. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet–May.)
53. Widening the powers of *raion* soviets. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet–May.)
54. On the condition of mass-work in the Soviets (sections, prefects, worker *aktiv* around soviet establishments). (Report by fraction of Mossoviet, co-report by *orgraspred*–June.)
55. Purge of soviet apparatus, struggle against bureaucracy, promotion into the soviet apparatus, widening of elective method. (Report by fraction of Mossoviet, co-report by *orgraspred* and RKI–May.)

### Questions of cultural construction and mass work

56. On introduction of universal compulsory education in Moscow and the *oblast'*. (Report by education department, co-report by *agitprop*–June.)
57. Liquidation of illiteracy in Moscow *guberniya* and measures for liquidating illiteracy in the *oblast'*. (Report by *agitprop*–July.)
58. Workers' education. (Report by education department, co-reports by fraction of MGSPS, *agitprop* and *komsomol*–July.)
59. Report by *Rabochaya Moskva* (July.)
60. Improvements in the press and the publication of mass literature. (Report by *agitprop*–August.)
61. On mass anti-religious work. (Report on *agitprop*–August.)
62. Improvements in the work of the cinema and radio. (Report by *agitprop* and *Sovkino*–May.)
63. Mass work in the shop and shift. (Report by MGSPS, co-report by *orgraspred* and *agitprop*–July.)
64. Measures for strengthening mass agitation (meetings, workers' conferences, excursions, etc.). (Report by *agitprop*–May.)
65. On work among the rural intelligentsia. (Report by *agitprop*–June.)
66. Measures for re-training of soviet, trade union and co-operative *aktiv*. (Report by *agitprop* and *orgraspred*–April.)
67. Work among national minorities. (Report by *agitprop*–April.)
68. First results of practical work in production in VUZy and measures for training proletarian specialists and promoting workers into VUZy (from the point of view of fulfilling the resolutions of the July plenum of the TsK). (Report by *orgraspred*, *agitprop*, one of VTUZy–April.)
69. On work among scientific personnel. (Report by *agitprop*–July.)
70. On work among engineers and technical personnel. (Fraction of UMBIT and MK *orgraspred*–May.)
71. Five Year Plan for club building. (Report by MGSPS–May.)

### Red Army

72. Report by *Revvoensovet* of the military district on the condition of Red Army units and strengthening political-educational work in them. (May.)
73. On the condition of war production enterprises in Moscow *guberniya* (Report by VPU-May.)

### Party construction

74. Recruitment of workers and poor peasants into the party.
  - a) Report by Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, Bogorod and Volokolamsk *ukoms*. (May.)
  - b) Report by *orgaspred* on fulfilment of directives of the seventeenth *guberniya* party conference. (September.)
75. Questions of the party purge:
  - a) Plan for implementation. (Report by MKK and *orgaspred*-May.)
  - b) On the course of the campaign and the preliminary results. (August-September.)
76. On the condition of party cadres. (Report by *orgaspred*-July.)
77. On cell buro elections (directives). (Report by *orgaspred*-June.)
78. On the sub-division of the Moscow *raions*, organisation of *okrugs* and composition of the party conference. (Report by *orgaspred*-May-June.)
79. On the involvement of members of the MK in the MK's practical work. (Report by *orgaspred*-April.)
80. Practical work by party committees in large enterprises. (Report by *orgaspred*-August.)
81. Summer re-training of party *aktiv*. (Report by *orgaspred* and *agitprop*-April.)
82. On the system of party education and training for recent recruits to the party. (Report by *agitprop* and *orgaspred*-June.)
83. Results of delegates' meetings of women workers and peasants. (Report by women's department-June.)
84. Promotion of women workers to managerial work. (Report by women's department-April.)
85. On women delegates' elections. (Report by women's department-July.)
86. Work among women workers and peasants in connection with the seventeenth *Guberniya* Party Conference. (Report by women's department-August.)
87. On the growth of the komsomol, recruitment of worker-komsomols into the party and the question of over-aged members in the komsomol. (Report by Moscow komsomol-July.)
88. On the condition of agitation and propaganda in the komsomol. (Report by Moscow komsomol-June.)
89. On the purge in the komsomol. (Report by Moscow komsomol-July.)
90. Questions of the preparation for the first *oblast'* Party Conference. (August-September.)

# Appendix 3:

## Composition of Moscow Party Conferences, 1925–34

	Conference (date)								
	XIII (1/25)	XV (1/27)	XVI (11/27)	XVII (3/29)	I (9/29)	III (1/32) MOK MGK		IV (1/34) MOK MGK	
Delegates									
Representatives of the TsK (%)	2 1.6	1 0.6	2 1.0	1 0.4	2 0.7	7 3.8	8 5.0	8 8.4	6 6.3
Representatives of the MK (including heads of otuely) (%)	15 11.8	15 8.5	15 7.7	16 7.1	21 7.3	23 12.5	19 11.9	9 9.5	20 21
Representatives of the RKs (%)	17 13.4	19 0.7	18 9.2	22 9.7	19 6.6	11 6.0	23 14.4	11 11.6	18 19
Representatives of local organisations outside Moscow (ukoms, okruzhkoms, etc.) (%)	22 17.3	30 16.9	32 16.4	30 13.3	93 32.3	42 22.9	0 0	15 15.6	0 0
Representatives of Soviet organisations (%)	2 1.6	11 6.2	8 4.1	7 3.1	10 3.5	9 4.9	16 10	1 1	3 3.2
Representatives of trade union organisations (%)	8 6.3	13 7.3	14 7.2	10 4.4	19 6.6	11 6.0	7 4.4	3 3.1	1 1
Heads of trusts, directors of factories, etc.* (%)		20 11.3	20 10.3		30 10.4				
Representatives of Komsomol organisations (%)	4 3.1	5 2.8	2 1.0	7 3.1	7 2.4	2 1.1	7 4.4	2 2.1	1 1.0
Representatives of military organisations (%)	2 1.6	3 1.7	4 2.0	4 1.8	7 2.4	6 3.3	2 1.3	4 4.2	0 0

	Conference (date)									
	XIII (1/25)	XV (1/27)	XVI (11/27)	XVII (3/29)	I (9/29)	III (1/32)		IV (1/34)		
Delegates						MOK	MGK	MOK	MGK	
Representatives of the press (%)	2 1.6	5 2.8	3 1.5	6 2.7	6 2.1	3 1.6	1 0.6	3 3.1	1 1.0	
Representatives of the GPU (%)	1 0.7	2 1.1	2 1.0	2 0.9	2 0.7	3 1.6	4 2.5	2 2.1	1 1.0	
Representatives of educational establishments. <sup>†</sup> (%)	3 2.4	3 1.7	5 2.6	6 2.7	5 1.7	3 1.6	4 2.5			
Secretaries of local (factory or office (level) Party cells.* (%)		23 13.0	27 13.9		22 7.6					
Workers* (%)		23 13.0	37 19.6		38 13.1					
Others (%)	78 38.6	4 2.3	6 2.5	115 51	7 2.4	64 34.8	69 43.1	37 39	44 46.5	
Women <sup>‡</sup> (%)	10 7.9	12 6.8	16 8.2	29 12.9		16 8.7	14 8.7	2 2.1	8 8.4	
Total members (%)	101 79.5	131 74	141 72.3	146 64.6	201 69.8	118 64.1	112 70	70 73.6	70 73.6	
Total candidates (%)	26 20.5	46 26	54 27.7	80 35.4	87 30.2	66 35.9	48 30	25 26.4	25 26.4	
Total (%)	127 100	177 100	195 100	226 100	288 100	184 100	160 100	95 100	95 100	

\* Detailed figures available for the XV, XVI and I conferences only. For the other conferences, this and other categories appear under 'others'.

<sup>†</sup> No information for 1934

<sup>‡</sup> No figures available for I *oblast'* conference

### Notes

1. The large increase in representatives from the province in September 1929 coincided with the formation of the Moscow *oblast'* and the incorporation of several new areas, whose paid staffs were added to the MK, at least temporarily.
2. Although figures for the number of workers, cell secretaries, etc., are not always available, they may be extrapolated from the number of 'others'. The proportion of these categories rose steadily, reaching a peak in March 1929, and then declined to around 35 per cent in the *obkom* and 45 per cent in the *gorkom*.

3. The women delegates were predominantly candidate members, which helps to explain their numbers in 1929, when the proportion of candidates was highest.

*Sources*

XIII Moscow Guberniya Conference data from *XIII Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya RKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, p. 250.

XV Moscow Guberniya Conference data from *XV Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, pp. 468–472.

XVI Moscow Guberniya Conference from *XVI Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, Bulletin no. 10, pp. 172–6.

XVII Moscow Guberniya Conference from *Pravda*, 7 March 1929.

I Moscow Oblast' Conference from *I Moskovskaya Oblastnaya Konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, vol. 2, pp. 217–29.

III Moscow Oblast' Conference from *III Moskovskaya Oblastnaya i II Gorodskaya Konferentsii VKP (b), stenograficheskii otchet*, Bulletin no. 13, pp. 9–16.

II Moscow City Conference from *ibid.*, pp. 26–31.

IV Moscow Oblast' Conference from *IV Moskovskaya Oblastnaya i III Gorodskaya Konferentsii VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, pp. 625–26.

III Moscow City Conference from *ibid.*, p. 626.



# Notes

## INTRODUCTION

1. The pioneer of this type of research was undoubtedly Moshe Lewin, whose essay, 'Society, State and Ideology during the First Five Year Plan' (published in S. Fitzpatrick (ed.) *Cultural Revolution in Russia* (Bloomington, 1978) pp. 41–77) was seminal. See also *The Making of the Soviet System, Essays in the Social History of Interwar Russia* (London, 1983), esp. chs 8–12.
2. The totalitarian model was most influential in the USA, and it is there that its decline has stimulated the greatest controversy about Soviet history. Definitions of totalitarianism vary in their choice of emphasis, but the idea of a single hierarchical ruling party, usually led by one man, is central to all interpretations. See Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (London, 1972) pp. 124–5. Other common features of 'totalitarian regimes' include the use of psychological or actual terror as a means of control, backed up by powerful official ideologies which promise future rewards for present sacrifices, central control of the armed forces and mass media and the centralised direction of the economy. These characteristics are drawn from the influential model provided by C.J. Friedrich and Z.K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956) pp. 9–10.
3. One of the greatest exponents of this British historical tradition, although not by any means the only one, was the late E.H. Carr. As Rudolf Schlesinger remarked, his work contrasted with that 'produced either by outsiders whose judgement is affected by hopes and fears in the Western framework rather than by characteristics of the society under discussion, or by persons whose acquaintance with the subject originated in their more or less active participation in the struggles through which the USSR attained its present form', *Soviet Studies*, 1950–1, p. 389.
4. The totalitarian thesis has been under attack since the 1950s, partly as a result of political changes within the countries (especially in Eastern Europe) to which it was applied. The academic debate has been voluminous. For a recent discussion of the model's weaknesses and generally pernicious influence, see S.F. Cohen, 'Scholarly Missions: Sovietology as a Vocation', in his *Rethinking the Soviet Experience, Politics and History since 1917* (London, 1985).
5. See R.W. Davies, *The Soviet Economy in Turmoil* (London, 1989).
6. The 'atomisation' of society, its dissolution into a number of individuals, is regarded as a classic feature of totalitarian systems. Among the many excellent studies which suggest that horizontal social groups continued to form despite the social turmoil of the late 1920s and 1930s are Sheila

- Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the USSR, 1921–1934* (Cambridge, 1979); John Barber, 'Soviet Workers and the State' (unpublished paper presented to the annual Conference of the National Association for Soviet and East European Studies, 1982), L. Viola, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland; Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivisation* (New York, 1987); and Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution, Politics and Workers, 1928–1932* (New York, 1988).
7. The most recent such study is William Chase's book on Moscow workers under NEP, which tentatively concludes that a substantial section of the Moscow working class supported many of Stalin's policies in 1928–9. W.J. Chase, *Workers, Society and the Soviet State, Labor and Life in Moscow, 1918–1929* (Urbana, 1987) esp. pp. 300–4. Roberta Manning's work on the Belyi district (*raion*) takes a similar line. As she puts it, 'the Soviet regime' in the countryside in the later 1930s was 'dependent ultimately, like all governments, on the consent of the governed'. *Government and the Soviet Countryside in the Stalinist Thirties: The Case of Belyi Rayon in 1937*, Carl Beck Papers in Soviet and East European Studies, no. 301, p. 46. It must be said that so far the evidence for 'consent', as opposed to acquiescence, presented by these writers is slim.
  8. See, in particular, J. Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges. The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933–1938* (Cambridge, 1985). Many of Getty's remarks about the chaos in the provincial party organisations were anticipated by Merle Fainsod in his path-breaking *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958). However, Fainsod drew very different conclusions, continuing to favour the totalitarian model in the face of his own empirical findings. (For an example, see p. 76, where Fainsod refers to the regional party secretary's role as 'broker' between the centre and his region.)
  9. The 'thaw' began in 1956 and lasted for about a decade. A number of historians contributed to the widening debate, including V.V. Adamov, E. Burdzhakov, P.V. Volobuev and V.P. Danilov. Considerable encouragement was given to their work by the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, both in his famous 'secret speech' to the twentieth Party Congress in 1956 (the speech, *O kul'te lichnosti i ego posledstviyakh*, was officially published in the Soviet Union for the first time in *Nedelya*, 1989, no. 16) and at the twenty-second Party Congress in 1961.
  10. The names of S.P. Trapeznikov and F.M. Vaganov are closely linked with this reaction. See R.W. Davies, *Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution* (London, 1989), pp. 3–4.
  11. The main virtue of Soviet works published during this period was that their authors had often been allowed to see archival material closed to Western or dissident scholars. Despite this, however, many of the main works on the Moscow Party give misleading accounts of political developments, in places even misquoting their sources. The main works on Moscow in this period are *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii*

- KPSS (2nd edn, Moscow, 1983); F.M. Vaganov, *Pravyi uklon v VKP(b) i ego razgrom* (2nd edn, Moscow, 1970); *Moskovskie bol'sheviki v bor'be s pravym i "levym" opportunizmom, 1921–1929 gg.* (Moscow, 1969); N.M. Aleshchenko, *Moskovskii sovet v 1917–1941 gg.* (Moscow, 1976); and *Istoriya rabochoykh moskvy, 1917–1945* (Moscow, 1983)
12. For an account of the development and scope of the Soviet debate, see Davies, *Soviet History in the Gorbachev Revolution*.
  13. One of the most startling of these was a memoir written by Bukharin's widow, Anna Larina, which appeared in *Znaniya* from October to December 1988. But others, often by less distinguished people, have also made an enormous impact. Of particular interest are the recollections of the thousands of ordinary people who suffered under Stalin, many of which are now being recorded in an attempt to preserve the collective memory before the individuals involved die. See *Moscow News*, 1988, no. 44, p. 16, 'Stalin's Victims: The Last Survivors'.
  14. *Moscow News*, 1988, no. 48, p. 5.
  15. 'Vom öffentlichen Gebrauch der Historie', *Die Zeit*, 7 November 1986. Quoted in C.S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past* (Harvard, 1988) p. 59.
  16. Extensive proof of this is presented in *Russian Review*, 1986, vol. 45.
  17. See 'The executioner's song', *Moscow News*, 1988, no. 48, p. 11.
  18. Kamil Ikramov, whose father disappeared in 1938, was not allowed to work in party archives in Tashkent or to see the last note his father wrote before his arrest. 'Resistance to de-Stalinisation in the provinces is especially persistent', he commented in an interview for *Moscow News*. (1989, no. 25, p. 16).
  19. The most celebrated attack on *glasnost* was a letter from 'Nina Andreeva', which appeared in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* on 13 March 1988. Other critics are less forthright, but they include influential figures such as F.M. Vaganov.
  20. As Alfred G. Meyer put it, they appear to be 'whitewashing' some aspects of Soviet history (*Russian Review*, 1986, vol. 45, p. 404). Meyer's is far from the most extreme example of this type of criticism. Peter Kenz, writing in the same discussion, remarked that 'the revisionists make an extraordinary leap and absolve the leadership of responsibility for mass murder' (*ibid.*, p. 397) Stephen Cohen made similar criticisms in the essay on historical approaches cited above.
  21. The most striking recent defence of the totalitarian model was mounted by Geoffrey Hosking. His view, expressed in his 1988 Reith Lectures, was that 'none of [the new labels, such as corporatism] has ever replaced the totalitarian model as an instrument for enabling us to see the Soviet system as a whole. None of them defines the essence of the system as opposed to characterising certain of its aspects', *The Listener*, 10 November 1988, p. 17.
  22. For the former, see Ante Ciliga's memoir of the period, *The Russian Enigma* (London, 1979), ch. 9, pp. 274–91. Roy Medvedev, in his important study of Stalinism, takes the other line, blaming Stalin personally for the excesses of the 1930s and thus exonerating Lenin and the revolutionary tradition

- of 1917. *Let History Judge; The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism* (Vintage edn, New York, 1973).
23. Robert Conquest, for example, concludes his chilling study of collectivisation in the Ukraine with the judgement that 'the verdict of history cannot be other than one of the criminal responsibility'. *The Harvest of Sorrow; Soviet Collectivisation and the Terror-Famine* (London, 1986) p. 300.
  24. *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York, 1937).
  25. Trotsky (and Trotskyists, such as Ernest Mandel), regarded the USSR as a 'degenerate workers' state', dominated by a clique (not a class) which no longer ruled in the interests of workers. Other critics have seen the party and bureaucracy collectively as a new 'ruling class' in the Soviet Union. Among these, the more prominent are Milovan Djilas (*The New Class*, 1966) and Tony Cliff (*Russia, a Marxist Analysis*, 1964).
  26. A recent work in this tradition is Donald Filtzer's *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialization* (London, 1986). Michael Voslensky's *La Nomenklatura* (French trans., Paris, 1980) focuses on what he sees as the new ruling class from the Revolution to the present.
  27. Walter Laqueur, noting the political overtones of Soviet historical studies in the West, considered that the different perspectives of Western scholars helped to 'promote a better understanding of the significance of the Russian revolution'. However, he was prepared to concede that 'distortion set in ... when the impact became too overwhelming or when Western students accepted passing political phases ... as permanent absolutes'. *The Fate of The Revolution* (New York, 1967) p. 161.
  28. For an example of the widely diverging estimates of the number of victims of Stalinist repression, see the debate between Stephen Rosefielde (his articles include 'The First Great Leap Forward Reconsidered', *Slavic Review*, 1980, no. 4; 'Excess Mortality in the Soviet Union; A Reconsideration of the Demographic Consequences of Forced Industrialisation, 1929-1949', *Soviet Studies*, 1983, no. 3; 'Excess Collectivisation Deaths, 1929-1933: New Demographic Evidence', *Slavic Review*, 1984, no. 1) and Stephen G. Wheatcroft (examples of whose contributions would include S.G. Wheatcroft and R.W. Davies, 'Stephen Rosefielde's Kliukva', *Slavic Review*, 1980, no. 4; S.G. Wheatcroft, 'On Assessing the Size of Forced Concentration Camp Labour in the Soviet Union, 1929-1956', *Soviet Studies*, 1986, no. 2; S.G. Wheatcroft, 'A Note on Stephen Rosefielde's Calculations of Excess Mortality in the USSR, 1929-1949', *Soviet Studies*, 1984, no. 2). The debate was more or less resolved (in Wheatcroft's favour) by Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Silver, 'Demographic Analysis and Population Catastrophes in the USSR', *Slavic Review*, 1985, no. 3. Another example of the revisionist controversy is the downplaying of Stalin's role apparent in some recent work on the Communist Party in the 1930s. In his review (*Times Literary Supplement*, 9 May 1986, pp. 503-4) of Getty's *Origins of the Great Purges*, Conquest remarked that 'the establishment of the Stalinist autocracy ... is treated [by Getty] as a fairly minor matter, hitherto exaggerated'. A similar

- criticism could be made of the work of the French historian, Gabor Rittersporn. ('Société et appareil d'état soviétiques (1936–38): Contradictions et interférences', in *Annales Économies Sociétés Civilisations*, 1979, no. 4).
29. Recently a few glimpses into the history of the secret police have been published, such as 'Citizen Zhdanov's warning' (*Moscow News*, 1989, no. 14, p. 16) and 'Po dannym razvedki' (*Pravda* (P), 8 May 1989, p. 4).
  30. Among the exceptions are the works (some still unpublished) of J.B. Hatch (*Labor and Politics in NEP Russia: Workers, Trade Unions and the Communist Party in Moscow, 1921–1928* (forthcoming); Richard Sakwa (*Soviet Communists in Power, A Study of Moscow During the Civil War, 1918–1921*, London, 1988); and Nobuo Shimotomai *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule, 1931–34* (London, forthcoming).
  31. Cohen's biography of Bukharin is an example of the problem. Excellent where it is discussing Bukharin's contributions to Bolshevik theory or his relationship with his colleagues in the Central Committee, it dissolves into speculation when the question of broad support for the Right arises.
  32. It is intended to complement work on the provincial (and largely rural) Smolensk party organisation, especially Fainsod's *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*.
  33. For a discussion of the value of Soviet memoirs, see H. Kuromiya, 'Soviet Memoirs as a Historical Source', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 12, 1985, nos. 2–4, pp. 293–326.
  34. Fainsod and Getty used rural Smolensk for their studies because of the availability of its archives. Both conceded that Smolensk might not be typical of the party as a whole, although as a rural organisation in a predominantly peasant country, its study was amply justified.
  35. The Leningrad party was more 'proletarian', and also, after October 1917, considered itself the real vanguard party organisation. The result was a vigorous and not always healthy rivalry between activists in the two cities.
  36. Sheila Fitzpatrick, writing in *Russian Review*, 1986, vol. 45, p. 369.
  37. For example Laura Engelstein, *Moscow, 1905: Working Class Organisation and Political Conflict* (Stanford, 1982); Victoria E. Bonnell, *Roots of Rebellion: Workers' Politics and Organisations in St Petersburg and Moscow, 1900–1914* (Berkeley, 1983); Diane Koenker, *Moscow Workers and the 1917 Revolution* (Princeton, 1981); J.B. Hatch, 'Labor and Politics in NEP Russia: Workers, Trade Unions, and the Communist Party in Moscow 1921–1926' (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1985).
  38. *Ocherki Istorii Moskovskoi Organizatsii KPSS* (1983 edn, vol. 2) p. 60.
  39. Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York, 1937) p. 59.
  40. Chase, p. 29.
  41. Home of Peter the Great's palace artisans, and still characterised by narrow streets bearing names like Kalashnyi Pereulok (Biscuit lane) and Plotnikov Pereulok (Carpenters' lane).
  42. Lyons, p. 83.

43. Chase, pp. 26–7.
44. The extent of the housing crisis is graphically described by Chase. Those fortunate enough to be housed were packed into single rooms, while the homeless ‘were forced to sleep in corridors, storerooms, sheds, kitchens, bathhouses, and even asphalt cauldrons’ (p. 185).
45. Until the 1940s there was still a collective farm on the edge of the south-western bend in the Moskva river, now the site of the Lenin Stadium, and well within the city limits.
46. Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diary*, ed. Gary Smith, trans. Richard Sieburth (Cambridge, Mass., 1986) p. 67.
47. *Moskva v tsifrakh* (Moscow, 1934) p. 9.
48. *Rabochaya Moskva* (RM), 9 October 1927.
49. Per capita ‘living space’ had fallen to half the 1918 level by 1925. *Istoriya Moskvyy*, vol. 6, pt 1 (Moscow, 1957) p. 297.
50. The source for this was Uglanov’s report on workers’ conferences at the fourth Moscow Committee Plenum in 1926. *IV Plenum Moskovskogo Komiteta* (Moscow, 1926) p. 7.
51. *Rabochaya Moskva* reported many such conversion projects in the 1924–7 period, carrying pictures of the symbolic moment when the cupola, adorned with crosses, was finally lowered to the ground.
52. No church building was safe, regardless of historical or architectural merit. Part of the Andronnikov monastery, for example, was converted in to a crematorium in 1927, and the Donskoi came within an ace of being demolished in order to make way for a club for the workers of the Krasnyi Proletarii factory. Only the intervention of the Commissar for ‘Enlightenment’, Lunacharskii, saved it.
53. The plan is reproduced in *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh s’ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK* (7th edn, 1953) vol. 2, pp. 656–63. See also text, ch. 4, pp. 79–81 and Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule*.
54. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh*, p. 660.
55. Figures vary, especially for the period of Civil War, but a recent estimate gives Moscow’s population as approximately 1.8 million in 1917, compared with a little over 1 million in 1921. Hatch, p. 38.
56. Hatch, p. 38.
57. See Chase, p. 31, and pp. 74–86 for a discussion of the city’s demographic recovery.
58. Chase, pp. 76–7.
59. *ibid.*, p. 79.
60. *Rabochaya Moskva*, RM, 27 September 1925.
61. *Statisticheskii spravochnik goroda Moskvyy i moskovskoi gubernii* (Moscow, 1927) introduction.
62. Precise comparisons are difficult to establish because of the changing methods of accounting used in Soviet statistical sources. However, if we take figures for the total number of people employed in industry as a whole (including white-collar workers) the figures for 1932 were 24.2 million

- nationally and 1.7 million in Moscow. Sources, D. Filtzer, p. 45 and *Moskva v tsifrakh* (Moscow, 1934) table 1, p. 83.
63. John Barber, 'The Impact of Rural Migrants on the Soviet Working Class, 1928–1941' (unpublished paper presented to the SSRC Conference on Industrialisation and Change in Soviet Society, 1928–1941, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1988) p. 1.
  64. Hiroaki Kuromiya, 'The Crisis of Proletarian Identity in the Soviet Factory, 1928–1929', *Slavic Review*, 1985, no. 2, p. 287.
  65. Barber, pp. 11–13.
  66. See Chapter 6, pp. 127–8.
  67. On textile workers, see C.E. Ward, *Russia's Cotton Workers and the New Economic Policy* (Cambridge, 1990).
  68. Yu I. Suvorov, 'Moskovskie Bol'sheviki v bor'be za effektivnost' proizvodstva v tekstil'noi promyshlennosti 1925–28 gg' (unpublished candidate dissertation, Moscow, 1969) p. 7.
  69. Davydova, p. 96.
  70. Davydova, p. 97.
  71. *Materialy o khozyaistve Moskvy v itoge pervoi pyatiletki* (Moscow, 1934) p. 132. These figures should be treated with a certain amount of caution. Soviet handbooks of the period make no allowance for the effects of rapid price inflation between 1928 and 1932.
  72. *ibid.*, p. 17.
  73. Later the Avtozavod imeni Stalina and now the Zavod imeni Likhacheva (ZIL), after its famous director of this period.
  74. This was a complaint uttered whenever the subject of seasonal workers came up in party circles. See, e.g., *Sputnik Kommunist* (SK), 1929, no. 8, p. 4.
  75. N.S. Davydova, 'Moskovskaya partiinaya organizatsiya v bor'be za provedenie kursa kommunisticheskoi partii na sotsialisticheskuyu industrializatsiyu strany, 1926–28 gg.' (unpublished Soviet doctoral dissertation, Moscow, 1971) p. 114.
  76. *Bol'shevik* (B), 1926, no. 14.
  77. Students from Moscow's VUZy were used in 1925, but the workers 'did not understand the language of the educated person', and later attempts were made using workers from local state concerns.
  78. For a survey of unemployment in this period, see Judith Shapiro, 'Unemployment and Politics in NEP Russia' (unpublished paper presented to the Soviet Industrialisation Project Seminar, CREES, University of Birmingham, December 1988).
  79. Precise figures are hard to calculate, since the definition of an unemployed person varied. This figure is taken from *Statisticheskii spravochnik goroda Moskvy i Moskovskoi gubernii* (1927) (Moscow, 1927) introduction. See also Uglanov's speech at the sixteenth Moscow provincial party conference in 1927, *XVI Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1927) bulletin no. 5.
  80. Shapiro, p. 1.

81. On this point, see Shapiro, p. 5.
82. See Sheila Fitzpatrick's essay, 'Cultural Revolution as Class War' (esp. pp. 19–20) in her *Cultural Revolution in Russia* (Bloomington, 1978).
83. Davydova, p. 114. See also M. McAuley, 'Bureaucracy and Revolution, the lesson from Leningrad, 1917–27' (University of Essex Russian and Soviet Studies Centre Discussion Paper, October 1984).

## 1 THE MOSCOW COMMITTEE AND THE LEFT, 1925–7

1. Bukharin's 'Testament', cited in Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York, 1973) p. 185. For the background to the 'Testament', see the account by his widow, Anna Larina, in *Ogonek*, 1987, no. 48, pp. 26–31.
2. Lenin, *Sochineniya*, vol. xxvi, p. 261.
3. Notable was the leadership's refusal to expel dissidents like the Workers' Oppositionists from the party. As one historian remarks, 'Lenin's Party opponents could still propagate their views with comparative impunity, and, though Lenin frequently denounced them in unbridled terms, his bark was fiercer than his bite', Merle Fainsod, *How Russia is Ruled* (Harvard, 1953), p. 141.
4. *XIV S'ezd VKP(b), stenograficheskiy otchet* (Moscow, 1926) p. 186.
5. An exception, but only in defeat, was Kamenev. See Fainsod, p. 154.
6. Bukharin's treatment of Zinoviev in his speech at the fourteenth Moscow Party Conference in 1925 was more vituperative than anything Stalin said in public at the time. See text, pp. 33–4.
7. Organisational bureau, a body technically subordinate to the Central Committee and responsible for general questions of party organisation, including the supervision of elections and appointments.
8. N.S. Davydova, introduction, p. 55.
9. TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 8–9.
10. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 213.
11. See, for example, Trotsky Archive (T) 2852 (Report by MK information department, November 1928).
12. See the wry comments to this effect by Victor Serge, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* (London, 1980), pp. 210–1.
13. I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed, Trotsky 1921–1929* (London, 1959) p. 135.
14. This is a point made by Rudolf Schlesinger, 'The Turning Point' (review of the second volume of Carr's *Socialism in One Country*), *Soviet Studies*, 1960, no. 4, p. 397.
15. This interest can be demonstrated by looking at reports from almost any 'broad workers' meeting' in the period. Questions about current policy debates outnumbered any others, for example at the open meeting of the Krasnyi Proletarii factory party organisation which discussed the sixteenth Party Conference in 1929. (TsGAOR 7952/3/82, 152–168.)



16. The party press provides a guide to the amount of information available to the rank and file. Generally informative in the early and mid-1920s, by 1929, it had ceased to publish reports on the debates at party meetings. Within two years, only the major speeches would be published, and they only occasionally.
17. Documents published in Michal Reiman's *The Birth of Stalinism* (trans. George Saunders, London, 1987; esp. pp. 123–6), claim that a Trotskyist insurrection was planned for the tenth anniversary of the Revolution in November 1927. But the documents themselves are probably forgeries, and there is no evidence to corroborate the suggestion in party or opposition records. Serge suggests that the idea was considered and rejected by Trotsky in 1925–6, and quotes Trotsky, who wrote in 1935 that 'No doubt a military coup against the Zinoviev–Kamenev–Stalin faction would have presented no difficulty and even caused no bloodshed; but its consequence would have been a speedier triumph for the very bureaucracy and Bonapartism against which the Left Opposition took its stand' (pp. 234–5).
18. R. Sakwa, *Soviet Communists in Power, A Study of Moscow During the Civil War, 1918–1921* (London, 1988) pp. 222–33.
19. For a determined discussion of this slogan as a tool in Stalin's rise to power, see R.H. McNeal, *Stalin, Man and Ruler* (London, 1988) pp. 90–7.
20. I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed* (London, 1954) pp. 106–7.
21. *ibid.*, pp. 107–8.
22. *ibid.*, pp. 109–11 and E.H. Carr, *The Interregnum, 1923–4* (London, 1969) pp. 114–15 and 303.
23. Carr, pp. 306–7 and 374–80.
24. Among the signatories of the 'Platform of the 46' were some of Trotsky's closest associates. Carr, p. 305.
25. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki v bor'be s pravym i "levym" opportunizmom, 1921–1929* (Moscow, 1969) p. 83.
26. *ibid.*, pp. 74–5.
27. Carr, pp. 334–5.
28. Even Rykov, no friend of the Left, admitted this in 1923. Deutscher, p. 132.
29. *ibid.*, p. 125.
30. He worked in the food industry, storing and packing fowl and game. *Deyateli soyuzov sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublikakh i oktyabr'skoi revolyutsii, Entsiklopediya Granat*, vol. 43, pt iii (Moscow, 1927) p. 166.
31. Uglanov's own account (in *Deyateli*, p. 175) states simply that he was 'ordered [*komandirovan*] to Nizhnii-Novgorod', without giving reasons. A more recent biography (in *Moskovskaya Pravda*, 12 February 1989) remarks that Uglanov, together with Central Committee member N.A. Komarov, attacked Zinoviev for his 'bureaucratic methods of leadership' in Petrograd. The 'difficult conflict' was resolved after intervention by Lenin, Stalin and Molotov.

32. Biographical details from RM, 30 January and 3 February 1925 and *Deyateli*, pp. 166–176. A sympathetic account of Uglanov's career appears in *Moskovskaya Pravda*, 12 February 1989, p. 3 ('Moya sovest' chista').
33. This is the line taken by Carr (*Socialism in One Country*, vol. 2, pp. 30 and 62) but there is no clear evidence for the story. In his review of Carr, Schlesinger discounts it altogether, while a more recent study of the Leningrad organisation in 1925 sees Uglanov's appointment in Moscow as a move against Zinoviev. D.A. Hughes, 'Zinoviev, the Leningrad Party Organisation and the 1925 Opposition', M.Soc.Sci. dissertation (University of Birmingham, 1977).
34. Carr (*Socialism in One Country*, vol. 2, p. 62) suggests that Uglanov was won over by Stalin early in 1925. Victor Serge (p. 224), writing about 1927, lumped Uglanov with the 'Centrists', whose other members were Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan and Kirov. These, contrasted with the 'Right' (Rykov, Kalinin, Chubar' and others), wanted 'only the preservation of power'. Bukharin 'drifted between the two' although 'in fact he belonged to the Right'. Uglanov undoubtedly valued power highly, but events in 1928 were to prove that he, like Bukharin, was not prepared to sacrifice principle for position. Schlesinger's suggestion that Uglanov was a long-standing Bukharinist is the most convincing interpretation of his actions after 1925.
35. RM, 17 May 1924.
36. *XIII Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1925) p. 115.
37. Serge, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*, p. 209.
38. *Pyatyi Ob''edinennyi Plenum MK i MKK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928), p. 65.
39. In January and February 1925, for example, *Rabochaya Moskva* ran a series reporting questions which had been put to Uglanov during his visits to factories, and his replies to them. The point was to establish the 'correct' approach to the question of Trotsky. Uglanov was as cautious as possible in public about the measures to be taken against the old Left. He urged the thirteenth Moscow Party Conference in January 1925 not to be 'in a hurry, comrades, too soon to get used to the knife' and explained that 'not to hurry' meant 'to give the party the possibility of thinking this question out well, to establish a firm, unwavering viewpoint, to explain it properly to the whole mass, to prepare it', *XIII Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya*, pp. 145–6.
40. Belen'kii's impressive revolutionary record must have weighed in this decision. Having joined the party in 1901 at the age of 16, he suffered a series of arrests and exiles, escaping to Paris in 1906, where he met Lenin and Krupskaya. He returned after the February Revolution and worked in Moscow, first in the provincial committee of the party and then in Krasnaya Presnya raikom, where he helped to organise the October Revolution. *Deyateli*, pt i, pp. 25–6.

41. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki v bor'be s pravym i "levym" opportunizmom*, p. 127.
42. Although the 'New Opposition' raised many issues of crucial importance for the future of the Revolution, including the question of the legitimacy of 'socialism in one country' and the serious problems inherent in the NEP economic balance, as an organised movement it was flawed from its inception. Personal ambition was more prominent in the motivation of its leaders than was usually the case in the 1920s. Both Zinoviev and Kamenev executed rapid political volte-face, for example over the peasant question, in pursuit of a coherent and attractive 'Opposition' platform. For this reason, historians have tended to be less generous to this than to any other opposition movement. See Carr, *Socialism in One Country*, vol. 2, chs 13–17. R.V. Daniels (*The Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia*, Harvard, 1960, ch. 11) is less critical.
43. The most outspoken public expression of this was Kamenev's speech at the fourteenth Party Congress in December 1925. Cited in text, p. 35.
44. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 123.
45. See also Carr, p. 53.
46. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, pp. 120, 128–9. It has been argued convincingly that Kamenev's concern was justified, in that peasants in general, encouraged by Bukharin's exhortation to 'get rich', were indeed growing wealthier under NEP. S.G. Wheatcroft, 'Views on Grain Output, Agricultural Reality and Planning in the Soviet Union in the 1920's', unpublished M.Soc.Sci. thesis (University of Birmingham, 1974).
47. Carr dismisses the Platform, doubting whether it represented anything more than a tool in the personal campaign against Stalin. 'Given the character and opinions of the signatories', he remarks, 'it is unlikely to have been an original or constructive document. Fear and detestation of Stalin was the one link which united the four', *Socialism in One Country*, vol. 2, p. 77.
48. Carr, p. 133.
49. See Schlesinger, p. 406. During the spring of 1926 a series of textbooks was put out by the Moscow Party *agitpropotdel*, the contents of which were to be criticised by the Leningraders for the kind of bias to which Schlesinger refers. The 'Moscow line' of the mid-1920s did not persist after 1929.
50. *Sotsial'nyi i natsional'nyi sostav VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 19.
51. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 132.
52. *Bolshevik*, 1925, nos 9–10.
53. For the Leningrad Conference see Carr, ch. 16.
54. *ibid.*, p. 134.
55. The Central Committee report was given by Rykov. RM, 9 December 1925.
56. RM, 10 December 1925.
57. *ibid.*
58. His speech was not published in *Pravda*, unlike those of many far less

significant contributors to the debate. From September 1925 onwards his speeches began to disappear from the pages of the press, and even from the stenographic reports of Moscow conferences.

59. RM, 13 December 1925.
60. 'Reply to the resolution of the Moscow Conference', *Novaya Oppozitsiya* (Leningrad, 1926) pp. 40–44.
61. See the account in Carr, ch. 16.
62. The five headings were 'a liquidationist lack of faith in the working class', the Leningrad party's claim that current policy was the equivalent of state capitalism, its exaggeration of the kulak danger, its 'Akselrodism' in swelling the party with unsuitable elements from the working class, and its pessimism.
63. *Novaya Oppozitsiya*, pp. 44–50. The extra paragraphs were on co-operatives.
64. This was the largest number of votes cast for the Opposition, on the first resolution. *XIV S"ezd VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1926) pp. 521–4. Later in the Congress, other votes were taken which showed the Opposition's strength dwindling. See also Carr, pp. 159–62.
65. Carr, p. 153.
66. A meeting of the Moscow party *aktiv* in January, attended by 3700 people, condemned the whole opposition and Kamenev in particular. *Pravda* (P) 12 January 1926.
67. Carr, p. 167.
68. *IV plenum MK* (Moscow, 1926). Konstantin Vasil'evich Ukhanov (born 1891 in Kazan') was a worker by social origin and had relatively recent (1921) experience of work 'at the bench'. Before his Moscow Soviet appointment he had been an active 'underground' (he joined the party in 1907), a pre-Revolutionary member of the Moscow Soviet (from the Dinamo factory, where he worked as a turner), and later the same factory's 'red' director and the head of the electrical trust, GET. *Deyateli*, vol. iii, pp. 181–2.
69. A special commission was sent to Leningrad in January to sort out the party organisation.
70. Even in Leningrad, the struggle was mainly confined to the party committee, with the rank and file playing no significant role. V. Serge, pp. 210–11.
71. RM, 20 January 1926.
72. TsGAOR 7952/3/258, 3.
73. Such secrecy was unusual at the time. Until the summer of 1928 MK plenums were reported as they happened in *Rabochaya Moskva*, and it was very unusual for major speeches not to be reported more or less verbatim. The February plenum is still unavailable, although Suvorov, who read a stenographic report in party archives, reported that its main business was the discussion of economic problems, especially productivity and wages. Yu.I. Suvorov, 'Moskovskie Bol'sheviki v bor'be za

- effektivnost' proizvodstva v tekstil'noi promyshlennosti. 1925–28 gg.' Candidate dissertation (Moscow, 1969) p. 119. Medvedev confirms that economic problems and mistakes dominated the discussion. *Let History Judge*, p. 53.
74. RM, 20 February 1926.
75. *IV plenum MK* (Moscow, 1926) p. 3. Another speaker, however, argued that it was the skilled workers who were most inclined to 'tailism'. *ibid.*, p. 28.
76. *Zakrytoe informatsionnoe pis'mo Moskovskogo Komiteta VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1926).
77. P, 28 September 1926.
78. Daniels, p. 274. In 1924 Zinoviev and Kamenev had been the advocates of the most repressive measures against the Left, while Stalin had argued for caution.
79. *ibid.*, p. 275.
80. Serge, a Trotskyist, recalled that 'we were taken aback by the news that Trotsky had concluded an agreement with the Leningrad opposition. How could we sit at the same table with the bureaucrats who had hunted and slandered us, who had murdered the principles and ideas of the Party?', Serge, p. 212. See also Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed*, p. 267.
81. Carr is most scathing about the United Opposition, remarking that 'it was cemented by hostility to the ruling group, and by little else'. *Foundations of a Planned Economy, 1926–1929*, vol. 2 (London, 1971), p. 12. The most thorough account, and a more sympathetic one, of their policies is in Daniels, pp. 288–311.
82. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 181.
83. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh* (1953 edn) vol. 2, p. 162.
84. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 161.
85. Among their targets were the main VUZy, including the mining and agricultural academies, and institutions like Narkomfin, Narkomtorg, Glavkontsesskom and Glavkhlopkom. *ibid.*, pp. 167–9.
86. More than a third of cells in this *raion* were in institutions. *ibid.*, p. 182.
87. Serge, p. 220. As Trotsky remarked, 'sometimes you finish like a Liebknecht and sometimes like a Lenin'.
88. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh* (1953 edn) vol. 2, pp. 160–6.
89. *ibid.*, pp. 175–6.
90. *Sed'moi plenum MK* (Moscow, 1926) pp. 69–70.
91. *Sed'moi plenum*, p. 10. In this month, wage cuts nationally came in for criticism, the Central Committee ordering wage levels to be restored. For the staffing cuts, see text, ch. 5, p. 103, and ch. 9, pp. 197–9.
92. *Sed'moi plenum*, p. 75.
93. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, pp. 189–90.
94. P, 3 October 1926.
95. *ibid.*
96. The document was a statement signed by Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev,

- Pyatakov, Sokol'nikov and Evdokimov. After an admission of various 'errors', including 'factional activity', it formally declared the Oppositionists' intention of refraining from any further work which might be considered 'anti-party'.
97. The question of intra-party democracy was one on which the Opposition had reserved particular criticism for Uglanov, whom they regarded as an archetypal bureaucrat of the new school. See text, chapter 2, p. 51.
  98. RM, 22 December 1926.
  99. Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, by comparison, had completely fulfilled its quota. *Izvestiya Tsentral'nogo Komiteta (IzTsK)*, 1927, no. 3.
  100. Meetings mainly devoted to the question of the Opposition were held in Bauman raion on 25 February and in Krasnaya Presnya raion 21 April. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, pp. 206–7.
  101. Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 26.
  102. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 212. This reaction to Opposition criticisms of Stalin's Chinese policy was repeated in Leningrad, where Serge made a speech on the subject in his local party cell. 'I felt', he wrote subsequently, 'that a paroxysm of hatred was building up and that we would be lynched on the way out'. Serge, p. 217.
  103. For an example, see the 'confession' of the 'Trotskyist', Panov, at Krasnyi Proletarii, TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 25 (cited on p. 45.).
  104. The total number of votes cast for the Opposition in Moscow in November 1927 was more than twice the number cast in the rest of the party. Nonetheless, the Moscow total was only 1.8 per cent. *Iz TsK*, 1927, no. 23.
  105. Serge, p. 209, and Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 27. This kind of demonstration at a railway station, with a mainly student crowd, continued to accompany the exile of oppositionists, possibly as a legacy of the student fervour of 1923. If the Left were numerically insignificant in terms of the whole Moscow organisation, they could still muster a core of zealous supporters when needed.
  106. According to archival sources reported in one Soviet account, 26 Opposition speeches were made in Krasnaya Presnya raion, 24 in Bauman raion and 28 in Zamoskvorech'e in August and September 1927. *Voprosy Istorii KPSS*, 1967, no. 2, p. 126.
  107. Serge, p. 217.
  108. P, 20 October 1927.
  109. Deutscher, p. 366.
  110. These details were reported by Trotsky in an account of the meeting written the following day and presented to the secretariat as a protest. Trotsky Archive, T 1032.
  111. Deutscher, p. 367.
  112. Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 366.
  113. P, 2 November 1927, 'Diskussionnyi listok no. 2'.
  114. P, 1 November 1927. After Trotsky's exile to Prinkipo, however, the

leadership were criticised for allowing him access to the foreign press. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 71–5.

115. For an account of why the Opposition risked the consequences of a counter-demonstration, see Deutscher, pp. 365–6.
116. V. Serge, *Vie et Mort de Trotsky* (Paris, 1951), p. 183.
117. Serge, *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*, pp. 225–7. P, 10 November 1927.
118. P, 10 November 1927.
119. P, 15 November 1927.
120. Khrushchev, a delegate from the Ukraine at the fifteenth Congress, ‘recalled’ in his memoirs how Yakovlev had visited the Ukrainian delegation one evening to explain to them ‘where we differed from the Zinovievites and what we were to do. In other words, he prepared us to carry out factional work against the Zinoviev-Kamenev opposition which was then gathering force’. *Khrushchev Remembers* (London, 1977) vol. 1, p. 54.
121. *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki*, p. 233.
122. Cited in Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, pp. 59–60.
123. This is a point made forcefully by William Chase, although he does not mention the Left Opposition in Moscow specifically. Chase, esp. ch. 5.
124. *XVI Moskovskaya gubernskaya konferentsiya VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1927) bulletin no. 10, p. 88.
125. Trotsky Archive, T 2852.
126. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 25. This file contains records of the Krasnyi Proletarii factory party cell for the year 1929.
127. In Panov's case, it was ‘Kamenev's diary’, though whether the document was genuine is open to doubt.
128. Trotsky's proposals for labour militarisation were far more repressive than the line taken by the party as a whole in the 1920s. As he put it in 1920, ‘Repression for the attainment of economic ends is a necessary weapon of the socialist dictatorship’. Quoted in Baruch Knei-Paz, *The Social and Political Thought of Leon Trotsky* (London, 1978) pp. 266–7.

## 2 THE RIGHT DEVIATION IN MOSCOW: 1928

1. The idea that the ‘so-called Right Deviation’ was a ‘form of new opposition’ has even been described as a fabrication by Stalin. *Pravda*, 9 October 1988.
2. *Sochineniya*, xi, p. 287.
3. The official Soviet work on the Right is F.M. Vaganov, *Pravyi uklon v VKP(b) i ego razgrom* (Moscow, 1970).
4. For example, E.H. Carr, *Foundations of a Planned Economy, 1926–1929*, vols 1 (with R.W. Davies) and 2 (London, 1969 and 1972); S.F. Cohen,

- Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution*; R.V. Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution*; *Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia*; M. Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study in Collectivisation* (Evanston, Ill., 1968); N. Shimotomai, 'The Defeat of the Right Opposition in the Moscow Party Organisation: 1928', *Japanese Slavonic and East European Studies*, 1983, vol. 4.
5. Extracts from Bukharin's *Notes of an Economist*, published in *Pravda*, 30 September 1928. Cited in Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 1, pp. 89–90 and 318–9.
  6. Although Bukharin, who was the principal theorist of the Right, has come to be regarded as its archetype in the Western literature, Rykov, who was then chairman of the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), was viewed by many as the leader of the movement at the time, and, indeed, in some circles, as the heir of Lenin as the government's unofficial head.
  7. For a discussion of this new policy, see Y. Taniuchi, 'A Note on the Ural-Siberian Method', *Soviet Studies*, 1981, no. 4.
  8. This is Shimotomai's view, for example (see p. 21).
  9. Cohen, p. 285.
  10. T 3126. Trotsky's paper, 'The July Plenum and the Right Danger', 22 July 1928.
  11. It was even rumoured at the time that Kaganovich was sympathetic to them, incredible though this now seems. T 1588, letter from Trotsky, June 1928.
  12. T 1897. For a discussion of the reliability and presentation of this document, see Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 65.
  13. T 1897.
  14. T 1897. Bukharin's widow constructed this meeting as a chance encounter in the street which Kamenev blew up out of proportion in order to ingratiate himself with the Stalinists. *Znamya*, 1988, no. 11, pp. 116–17.
  15. Carr, vol. 2, p. 76.
  16. He is praised for this consistency in *Moskovskaya Pravda*, 12 February 1989.
  17. *Vtoroi plenum MK* (Moscow, 1928) p. 20.
  18. *Vtoroi plenum MK i MKK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 43.
  19. Vaganov, p. 178. Courting the managers was one of the accusations levelled at Uglanov at the October joint plenum of the MK and MKK.
  20. R. Schlesinger, 'The Turning Point', p. 406.
  21. Quoted in Vaganov, p. 178. The source is allegedly the stenographic report of the January-February (second) MK plenum in 1928. Unless Vaganov has seen a special unexpurgated version, however, he is mistaken about this, for the remark is not printed in the stenographic report currently available in Moscow libraries.
  22. *Shestoi ob"edinennyi plenum MK i MKK* (Moscow, 1928) p. 17.
  23. On Uglanov's attitude to promotions, see ch. 9, p. 193.



24. *Vtoroi plenium* (1928) p. 43.
25. His definition of 'intra-party democracy' was 'to present promptly and correctly to the party organisation for solution the fundamental tasks confronting the party and the country; to draw into the discussion and solution of these questions the broad masses and party members; promptly and correctly to expound to the proletariat the fundamental questions of socialist construction; to test modifications of our policy by the reactions of the working class and of its separate sections, and in the light of this test to modify the party line', P, 4 June 1926.
26. For wage cuts, see chap. 1, p. 36. Unemployment figures from Uglanov's speech to the fourteenth Moscow Party Conference, RM, 11 December 1925. Population figures from the 1926 census, P, 12 January 1927.
27. At the beginning of the building season in 1928, so many workers descended on the city that those who wished to return home were given the fare to do so. W.J. Chase, *Workers, Society and the Soviet State*, p. 147.
28. Shimotomai, p. 20. I suspect that this description of him was more frequently used than the affectionate 'Uglanich' quoted in *Moskovskaya Pravda*, 12 February 1989.
29. Sakwa, pp. 132, 224 and 229.
30. Biographical information from RM, 30 January 1925, at the time of his appointment to the second secretaryship.
31. He is commemorated for this in a recent Soviet work on the Revolution in Moscow, *Soratriki: Biografii aktivnykh uchastnikov revolyutsionnogo dvizheniya v Moskve i Moskovskoi Oblasti* (Moscow, 1985) p. 471.
32. He died in May 1929.
33. Biographical information from Arkadii Vaksberg's laudatory article, 'Kak Zhivoi s Zhivymi', *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1988, p. 13.
34. Ryutin is best known as the author of the famous 'Ryutin Platform' of 1932. See chapter 4, pp. 83–5.
35. RM, 9 May 1928.
36. His appointment in Khamovniki *raikom* was confirmed in P, 18 January 1927. A 1925 report also mentions a Yakovlev on the MK, although it gives no initials. *XIII moskovskaya gubernskaya konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1925) p. 250.
37. Cohen, *Bukharin*, p. 235.
38. RM, 9 May 1928.
39. RM, 6 June 1928.
40. *XVI moskovskaya gubernskaya konferentsiya*, bulletin no. 10, p. 88.
41. *XVI S"ezd VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet*, (Moscow, 1930) pp. 363–4.
42. Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 76.
43. Vaganov, p. 180.
44. T 1835.
45. The full text of his speech is in RM, 17 and 18 July 1928.

46. *Shestoi ob''edinennyi plenum MK i MKK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 70.
47. T 2442, letter from a Moscow Trotskyist to Trotsky, September 1928.
48. T 2668, summary of Uglanov's speech by a Moscow Trotskyist, 25 September 1928.
49. These criticisms are listed in Uglanov's report in October. *Shestoi ob. Plenum MK i MKK*, pp. 10–11.
50. P, 21 November 1928.
51. *Pyatii ob''edinennyi plenum*, p. 4.
52. *ibid.*, p. 14.
53. *ibid.*, p. 10.
54. *ibid.*, p. 22.
55. *ibid.*, p. 45.
56. *ibid.*, p. 147.
57. T 2850.
58. RM, 29 September 1928.
59. Davydova, p. 313.
60. The letter was drafted personally by Uglanov and represented a last attempt to gain control of the MK before the elections of mid-October.
61. *Shestoi ob. plenum MK i MKK*, pp. 12–13.
62. Resolutions calling for these are to be found in *Pravda* for the first fortnight of October 1928.
63. *ibid.*, p. 12.
64. *ibid.*, p. 13.
65. *ibid.*, p. 12. The speech was made in August. At Stalin's instigation, Uglanov had already reprimanded Mandel'shtam at a closed session of the MK buro, but he was now called upon to do so openly, and to explain why he had not spoken out sooner.
66. 'That', Uglanov commented ironically, 'musn't be said', *ibid.*, p. 18.
67. *ibid.*, p. 15.
68. *ibid.*, p. 71.
69. *ibid.*, p. 92.
70. *ibid.*, p. 96.
71. *ibid.*, p. 112.
72. *ibid.*, p. 129.
73. T 2850.
74. A. Avtorkhanov (p. 63) gives a particularly vivid account of Uglanov's departure. At the plenum in November at which Uglanov was dismissed, he is reported as losing his temper and crying, 'Who is the secretary of the MK here, you or I, comrade Kaganovich?', to which Kaganovich, 'with perfect composure', replied, 'you are, Comrade Uglanov, for the time being'. At this, Uglanov shouted, 'Let me tell you, then, that I am such no longer', and 'picking up his briefcase, stalked out of the room'. This account has the merit, at least, of fitting in with Uglanov's personality, and it throws a new light on the familiar formula of party secretaries quitting their posts 'at their own request'. Like all Avtorkhanov's reports

- of the dealings of the MK, however, it cannot be trusted without corroboration. Reznikov, for example, the rapporteur in this case, does not appear in any list of MK or MKK members I have seen.
75. T 2850, letter from a Moscow Trotskyist, November 1928.
  76. The claim was made by Polonskii. *Shestoi ob. plenum*, p. 77.
  77. The information department (*informotdel*) was a sub-department of the *orgraspredotdel*. The surveys were for its internal use. While people who were collecting the material might have been inclined to minimise the threat from the Right in order to show off their *raion* as a 'loyal' one, for the most part the *orgraspredotdel*, controlled as it was by Stalinists, had good reason to get the picture straight.
  78. T 2167.
  79. T 2167.
  80. T 2167.
  81. T 2021, T 2167.
  82. T 2021.
  83. T 2021.
  84. TsGAOR 7952/3/82, 72. Report of a cell meeting in the Krasnyi Proletarii factory.
  85. T 2852.
  86. *Sputnik Kommunist* (SK), 1930, no. 3. See also chap. 6, pp. 126–9.
  87. T 2021.
  88. T 2534.
  89. TsGAOR, 7952/3/94, 17–18.
  90. See N. Semenov, *Litso fabrichnykh rabochikh prozhivayushchikh v derevnyakh i politprosvetrabota sredi nikh* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929).
  91. T 2818, Boguslavskii to Trotsky.
  92. The directors of some metal-working factories also inclined towards the Right, for example that of the Krasnyi Proletarii engineering works. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, *passim*.
  93. T 2850, letter from a Moscow Trotskyist to leading Trotskyists.
  94. T 2850.
  95. K. Ya. Bauman, *Polosa velikogo stroitel'stva. Doklad o rabote MK i orgburo TsK VKP(b) na I Mosk. Ob. Konf.* (Moscow, 1929), p. 100.
  96. L. Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 439.
  97. Typical figures were NKFin, 12.6 per cent reduction, NKZemRSFSR, 60.3 per cent, Mosfinotdel, 57.8 per cent. *XVI S'ezd*, p. 316.
  98. *ibid.* The purge of the state apparatus was linked to rationalisation. See ch. 9, pp. 200–2.
  99. P, 22 May 1930.
  100. This is Rosenfeldt's view, it is also to be found in more recent and broader works, including McNeal's biography of Stalin, where the leader is seen preparing carefully for the final struggle against the Right, manipulating political contacts and exploiting public opinion.
  101. Medvedev makes this point particularly clearly in his account of the Right.

As he puts it, 'by using repressive measures against them, by pitting the organisation against them, declaring the declaration of "rightist" views to be incompatible with Party membership, Stalin was in fact violating every member's right to discuss freely problems of Party policy, a right guaranteed by Party statute'. *Let History Judge*, p. 68.

102. *Khrushchev Remembers*, vol. 1, pp. 66–7.

### 3 BAUMAN AND THE CRISIS OVER COLLECTIVISATION: 1929–30

1. The best accounts of the crisis are to be found in R.W. Davies' works on the economic history of the great turn, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivisation of Soviet Agriculture, 1929–1930* (London, 1980) pp. 279–80, and *The Soviet Economy in Turmoil, 1929–1930* (London, 1989) pp. 103–4, and in Lynne Viola, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland, Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivisation* (New York, 1987) pp. 130–1.
2. Moscow was not a major grain-producing area. The Politburo commission on collectivisation recommended in December 1929 that priority be given to the Crimea and Lower Volga regions, followed by the Central Volga and North Caucasus. In these areas, collectivisation was to be completed by the spring of 1931 (autumn of 1930 for the first two), while in the Moscow region the target was the spring of 1932. However, the Moscow leadership attempted to secure 100 per cent collectivisation in parts of the *oblast'* by the spring of 1930. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, p. 188, and RM, 17 January and 25 April 1930.
3. P, 2 March 1930.
4. RM, 20 June 1930.
5. According to the official Soviet history, 'about 150 leaders of party organisations' were removed from their posts after the April MK plenum *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii* (vol. 2) p. 442. See also R.W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, p. 280.
6. Familiar faces on the reconstructed MK in 1929 included Polonskii, Tsifrinnovich and Giber. All three would be removed by 1930. For Polonskii, see text, pp. 70–1. Giber's removal, which was a minor scandal, is discussed on p. 212. Tsifrinnovich was removed in September 1929 for shielding a friend's husband, who later turned out to be a 'speculator'. K.Ya. Bauman, *Polosa velikogo stroitel'stva*, speech at the first Moscow *oblast'* conference (Moscow, 1929) pp. 97–8. He ended up directing the Solikolamsk Potash Trust, and was arrested and shot in 1937–8. See Medvedev, p. 229.
7. At the same time plans for the reconstruction of Moscow as a 'model' socialist city were being discussed in the party press. The idea that Moscow was in the vanguard was also a frequent motif in political speeches, whatever the subject-matter.

8. Borys Levytsky (ed.), *The Stalinist Terror in the Thirties. Documentation from the Soviet Press* (Stanford, 1974) p. 198.
9. S. Zdanovich, *Karl Bauman* (Moscow, 1967).
10. Levytsky, p. 198.
11. RM, 7 April 1929. According to this report both Bauman and his deputy, Polonskii, were appointed by the Central Committee, while the third secretary, Leonov, was formally appointed by the MK plenum.
12. P, 14 May 1929.
13. RM, 26 October 1928.
14. He was removed from his MK post in July 1930 and given work in the Central Committee *Orgburo*. RM, 27 July 1930.
15. RM, 7 January 1930.
16. He also made a major speech to Moscow propagandists on 3 May, published as *Za Bolshevistskoe ispravlenie oshibok k itogam III i IV plenumov MK VKP(b)* (Moscow 1930). For his speech at the June conference, see P and RM, 20 June 1930.
17. *I moskovskaya oblastnaya konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1929) p. 240.
18. RM, 10 January 1930.
19. Demoted politicians who ended up working in the central apparatus included Uglanov and Kotov (Narkomtrud), Leonov (CC Orgburo); and later S.V. Kosior and others (for whom, see Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 192 n.).
20. In Azerbaijan he clashed with Besso Lominadze, the first secretary of the Transcaucasian party committee. (See N. Shiokawa, 'Politicheskaya Situatsiya v SSSR. Osen' 1930 goda', *Acta Slavica Iaponica*, tom. VII, 1989, pp. 40–1). It is possible that Polonskii's posting to the Caucasus was a deliberate move, so typical of Stalin, to put two people of opposite political views into closely-linked or even competing positions. Lominadze was recalled to Moscow in November 1930 and Polonskii was among those who gave evidence against him. Polonskii returned to Moscow in 1933 as head of the Central Committee *orgotdel*, but thereafter his career took a series of downturns. From 1935–7 he was second secretary of VTsSPS, and from 1937 Commissar of Communications of the USSR, a post which served as an antechamber to the Lubyanka for several political figures in this period. He died as a result of repression in 1939. Levytsky, pp. 292–3, citing the Azerbaijan paper *Bakinskii Rabochii*, 19 June 1963.
21. For a vivid account of the Nepmen and other members of the 'urban bourgeoisie', see Alan M. Ball, *Russia's Last Capitalists, the Nepmen, 1921–1929* (Berkeley, 1987).
22. K.Ya. Bauman, *General'naya bol'shevistskaya liniya i nasha rabota*, speech to the seventeenth Moscow *guberniya* conference, 28 February 1929 (Moscow, 1929) p. 25.
23. *Vechernyaya Moskva*, 5 July 1929.

24. See, for example, his speech of April 1929, 'On the Right Deviation in the Party', *Soch.*, vol. xii, esp. pp. 43–9.
25. Ball (p. 73) describes a case in Ufa from the summer of 1928. Local authorities there were condemned by the leadership for the over-zealous application of public health regulations against a private trader. However, he does not mention the 'excesses' of the Moscow party the following year. Indeed, he takes most of his examples of repression from Moscow, thus creating the mistaken impression that the capital was typical.
26. For an example, see the section 'On the intensification of the class struggle' in Stalin's April 1929 speech, *Soch.*, vol. xii, pp. 34–9.
27. RM, 8 June 1930, report of Leonov's speech to the second Moscow *oblast'* conference.
28. *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS*, vol. ii. This is a deliberate omission, made more striking by the fact that the collectivisation campaign is treated fairly openly.
29. See Ball, p. 75, for figures on Moscow's Sokol'niki *raion*.
30. Walter Duranty, *I Write as I Please* (New York, 1935) pp. 275–77. Quoted in Ball, p. 75.
31. Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York, 1937) p. 286. Quoted in Ball, p. 79.
32. I.Ya. Trifonov, *Likvidatsiya ekpluatatorskikh klassov v SSSR* (Moscow, 1975) p. 229, citing from archives.
33. RM, 8 January 1930.
34. Reply to students at Sverdlov University, *Soch.*, vol. xii, p. 186.
35. RM, 8 June 1930. Speeches by Apasov, Fruntov and Gaidul'.
36. RM, 12 June 1930.
37. The relative position of Moscow is clearly illustrated by figures presented by R.W. Davies. On 1 June 1928, 0.7 per cent of peasant households in the Moscow *guberniya* were collectivised, compared with a USSR average of 1.7 per cent and an average for the RSFSR of 1.6 per cent. The North Caucasus and Volga regions had the greatest number of collectivised households, the most extensive collectivisation being in the North Caucasus, where 5.2 per cent of peasant households were collectivised. By 1 October 1929, 3.3 per cent of peasant households in the Moscow *oblast'* were collectivised, still below the national average of 7.5 per cent and the RSFSR figure of 7.3 per cent. The real leap in Moscow's collectivisation figures occurred between January and March 1930. On 1 March 1930, 74.2 per cent of households in the Moscow *oblast'* were collectivised, while the national average was only 57.2 per cent and that for the RSFSR, 58.8 per cent. Moscow now outstripped the Central and Lower Volga regions (60.3 and 70.1 per cent respectively) and approached the levels of the North Caucasus (79.4 per cent). Davies, table 17, pp. 442–3.
38. P, 16 June 1929. For the June plenum, see also Davies, p. 119.
39. K.Ya. Bauman, *Sotsialisticheskoe nastuplenie i zadachi moskovskoi*

*organizatsii*, report to the January joint plenum of the MK and MKK (Moscow, 1930) p. 16.

40. Leonov, in a speech of June 1930, explained that the Moscow *oblast'* had started off in 21st place in June 1929, had leapt forward to 9th place in January 1930 and then to 6th in early March, but had returned to 22nd in May 1930 as a result of the excesses of the early spring. P, 20 June 1930.
41. RM, 17 January 1930.
42. RM, 17 January 1930.
43. RM, 25 April 1930.
44. RM, 28 March 1930.
45. The half-page item on 4 February 1930 was typical, headed 'only full collectivisation can be the base for the liquidation of the kulaks' and comparing the records of the ten *okrugs*.
46. RM, 28 March 1930.
47. See Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, pp. 442–3.
48. *ibid.*, pp. 189–90.
49. *Kollektivnye khozyaistva* – collective farms.
50. Cited in Davies, p. 198.
51. Shimotomai, p. 22.
52. Bauman, *Polosa velikogo stroitel'stva*, p. 53.
53. *ibid.*, pp. 18–20. The quota of kulaks to be exiled from the Moscow province was increased from the original 7000 to over 13 000. Davies (p. 245) suggests that a figure of '13 000–16 000' was quoted.
54. RM, 28 March 1930.
55. *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS*, vol. 2, pp. 437–8. According to this account,

the CC VKP(b) was obliged to remind the leaders of party organisations in the non-grain producing areas of the essence of the party's line on the establishment of collective farms, warning them against the pursuit of rapid rates of collectivisation. On the 3 January 1930 it sent out a directive in which the issue of speeding up in questions of the collectivisation of agriculture was discussed. On 4 February that year the CC noted as an error the Moscow *obkom*'s resolution on dekulakization and the eviction of a large group of peasant families'.

While this is broadly correct, the omission of other directives, and the failure to describe the tone adopted by official newspapers such as *Pravda* creates a distorted image of the centre's intentions.

56. See, for example, the passage from an MK meeting with *okrug* and district party secretaries quoted in Davies, pp. 262–3. Bauman's enthusiasm is also noted by Zdanovich, p. 43.
57. Davies, esp. pp. 238–68.
58. *Ocherki Istorii*, pp. 437–8, and Davies, pp. 239–40 (the latter does not mention that telegrams were sent to the Moscow party leadership).

59. A Moscow newspaper, *Moskovskii Rabochii*, was criticised in *Sotsialisticheskoe zemledelie* for failing to mention that collectivisation was voluntary. Davies, p. 266.
60. Medvedev, p. 88.
61. *I moskovskaya oblastnaya konferentsiya VKP(b)*, p. 128.
62. *ibid.*, p. 107.
63. TsGAOR, 7952/3/493, 10.
64. P, 2 March 1930. It appeared simultaneously in *Rabochaya Moskva*.
65. For examples, see RM, 12 and 15 March 1930.
66. Davies, p. 442.
67. P, 29 March 1930.
68. P, 30 March 1930.
69. F.G. Leonov, *Za bolshevistskoe ispravlenie oshibok k itogam III i IV plenumov MK VKP(b)*, extracts from his speech to a meeting of Moscow propagandists on 3 May 1930 (Moscow, 1930) p. 6.
70. *Rabochaya Moskva* printed most of his speech on food procurement in July 1930, together with a prominent photograph of him. RM, 24 July 1930.
71. RM, 15 July 1930. However, his removal to Kazakhstan to supervise cotton production could hardly be regarded as 'promotion' after Moscow. Later he returned to the capital to head the Central Committee's department for science.
72. See, for example, the report of Kaganovich's speech, P, 8 June 1930.
73. RM, 27 July 1930. Leonov later took on another RSFSR *oblast'* post, not in Moscow, and was repressed in 1937. Medvedev, p. 202.
74. 153 senior *okrug* officials were dismissed in 1930, and 74 were transferred to other work. Davies, p. 280.

#### 4 KAGANOVICH'S PARTY ORGANISATION, 1930–2

1. Kaganovich was effectively to be Stalin's deputy at the national level from 1932–4. The best brief biography is presented in R. Medvedev, *All Stalin's Men* (Oxford, 1983).
2. As early as 1924 Kaganovich had been deputed to restore order to the dissident Ukrainian party organisation.
3. For Kaganovich's advocacy of enforced collectivisation, see R.W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive*, vol. 1, pp. 173 and 275–8. For his loyalty to Stalin at the seventeenth Party Congress in 1934, where he is reputed to have destroyed ballot papers containing votes against Stalin, see Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 156. Kaganovich's continued espousal of maximalist economic targets marked him out within the Politburo after 1932, giving rise to speculation by one observer that he (and Ezhov) headed a group which opposed the continuation of the less extreme approaches advocated by Kirov and others. See B. Nicolaevskii, *Power and the Soviet Elite*, 'The Letter of an Old Bolshevik'.



4. The plan, adopted at the Central Committee plenum on 15 June 1931, covered most aspects of the city's economy. See *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1953 edn) vol. 2, pp. 656–65.
5. There was relative stability at the top level in Moscow during the five years 1930–4. The number of MK and MGK buro members who continued to hold office between 1931 and 1934 was higher than the average over the previous three years, reflecting the central authorities' general satisfaction with Moscow's leaders. Of the 24-strong MK buro in November 1927, for example, only three (Polonskii, Ukhanov and Strievskii) were still there in June 1930 (an average attrition rate of roughly 2.9 people per month). This contrasts with the continuity of the following three years. Of the 22 members of the MGK of February 1931, ten remained at the third MGK conference in January 1934 (an attrition rate of roughly 1.5 per month), while of 27 MOK members elected in January 1932, only three, Ruben, Gaidul' and Trofimov, had disappeared from Moscow politics before the 1934 conference (on average, about 0.4 per month).
6. A.P. Shirin, who was also a 'new' Bolshevik (he joined the party in 1919), was appointed to the Bauman *raikom* first secretaryship in September 1929. His previous experience, mainly in Moscow, had been in the Bauman *raikom* *orgraspredotdel* and in the Moscow City Council of Trade Unions (MGSPS). RM, 14 September 1929.
7. Contrary to Medvedev's account, it was Kozlov, not Ryutin, whom Khrushchev replaced. See Roy Medvedev, *Khrushchev* (Oxford, 1982) p. 15. Kozlov was relieved of his post in July 1931 'at his own request', but the reason for his demotion was not given. RM, 26 July 1931.
8. The Moscow *gorkom* was created in February 1931 when the city was officially separated from the *oblast'* for administrative purposes.
9. His comments on the opposition of 1930 are particularly revealing in this respect. *Khrushchev Remembers*, pp. 66–9.
10. He was in the Urals during the *Kolchakovshchina*. His record does not specify what he did there, though his rapid promotion thereafter suggests that he was no traitor.
11. Instructors at this level were senior officials responsible for advising or guiding lower-level party organisations. Ryndin was also a full member of the Central Committee from 1923.
12. RM, 22 September 1929. A resolution of a joint MK and MKK plenum in August 1929 had attacked the current purge campaign. *Osnovnye resheniya po bor'be s byurokratizmom i uluchsheniyu gosapparata* (Moscow, 1929) p. 4.
13. RM, 11 October 1929.
14. P, 15 June 1930.
15. RM, 27 July 1930.
16. Kaganovich was frequently out of Moscow, travelling to areas like the Ukraine, Voronezh and Western Siberia. Medvedev, *All Stalin's Men*, p. 119.

17. Biographical details from RM, 1 March 1931, and *Bol'shaya Istoricheskaya Entsiklopediya* (1971) edn, vol. 4, p. 105.
18. Apart from Kaganovich, the 1934 MGK included N.I. Ezhov, A.I. Mikoyan, V.M. Molotov, Sergo Ordzhonikidze and Stalin. The MOK included A.A. Andreev, K.E. Voroshilov, M.I. Kalinin, S.M. Kirov, V.V. Kuibyshev, V.M. Molotov, G.G. Yagoda and Stalin. *IV moskovskaya oblastnaya i III gorodskaya konferentsii VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1934) pp. 625–6.
19. *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 84.
20. Roy Medvedev, reviewing Stewart Kahan's biography of Kaganovich, *Wolf of the Kremlin* (New York, 1987), in *Moscow News*, 1988, no. 52, p. 16.
21. For a detailed survey of the crisis, see R.W. Davies, *The Soviet Economic Crisis of 1931–3*, University of Birmingham CREES Discussion Papers, Soviet Industrialisation Series, no. 4, 1976.
22. See Donald Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialisation* (London, 1986) pp. 91–6.
23. In 1932 the real wages of Moscow industrial workers were only 53 per cent of the 1928 level. John Barber, 'The Standard of Living of Soviet Industrial Workers, 1928–1941', in *L'industrialisation de l'URSS dans les Années Trente. Actes de la Table Ronde Organisée par le Centre d'Études des Modes d'Industrialisation de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (10 et 11 décembre 1981)* (Paris, 1982) p. 116. By comparison with some estimates (see Filtzer, p. 91), this is an optimistic figure.
24. See Filtzer, pp. 111–12.
25. Cited in Bordyugov and Kozlov's article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 12 October 1988.
26. For a discussion of how many million, see B.A. Anderson and B.D. Silver, 'Demographic Analysis and Population Catastrophes in the USSR', *Slavic Review*, 1985, no. 3.
27. For a survey of industrial unrest in the USSR in these years, see Filtzer, pp. 81–90.
28. Accounts in *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* often took the form of 'Letters from Moscow', many of them unsigned. The Trotskyist *Byulleten' Oppozitsii* also carried accounts of the strikes.
29. An example was the sudden removal of Ukhanov. Overnight in February 1931, he was replaced as chairman of Mossoviet by Bulganin. Criticisms of him had appeared in *Rabochaya Moskva* as early as 1928, but no warning of his removal was given in the press in 1931.
30. Among their differences with Stalin, a tendency to favour clemency when dealing with political opposition has been noted by several historians. See A. Vaksberg, 'Kak zhivoi s zhivymi', *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1988, p. 13, and Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 157. For a thorough survey of Kirov's position on the pace of industrialisation, especially in 1933–4, see Francesco Benevenuti, *Kirov in Soviet Politics, 1933–1934*,

University of Birmingham CREES Discussion Papers, Soviet Industrialisation Series, no. 8, 1977.

31. One of the most prominent cases was the affair of the 'Right-“Left” bloc'. Its leaders, condemned in 1930 for criticising the tempo and costs of industrialisation and collectivisation, were S.I. Syrtsov, a client of Stalin's from the Siberian *obkom*, and the Georgian, Besso Lominadze, who had been seen as one of Stalin's protégés in the late 1920s. See R.W. Davies, 'The Syrtsov-Lominadze Affair', *Soviet Studies*, 1981, no. 1, and Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 142.
32. The suggestion that a 'Ryutin group' met regularly in Moscow between 1928 and 1932 requires much more research. For accounts of it, see Pierre Broué, 'Trotsky et le Bloc des Oppositions de 1932', *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*, no. 5 (January–March 1980) pp. 13–14, and Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, pp. 142–3. The recent official account states that in 1932 the group was 'at the stage of organisational formation'. *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 108.
33. The 'Industrial Party' trial commanded prominent coverage in the national and Moscow press in November–December 1930. Among the charges levelled against its members, mainly engineering and other technical specialists, the accusation that they were organising an international campaign to wreck the Soviet economy was entirely fabricated. Nonetheless five of the most senior members of the 'group' were sentenced to be shot, and others received long terms of imprisonment.
34. *Khrushchev Remembers*, vol. 1, p. 65.
35. *ibid.*, p. 66.
36. RM, 3 November 1929.
37. RM, 29 May 1930.
38. *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 66.
39. At the top level, by contrast, no conflict between generations is apparent. The elite was predominantly composed of Old Bolsheviks until the mid-1930s.
40. *Khrushchev Remembers*, pp. 66–9.
41. *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 110. He later wrote that he was not a member of any 'Bukharin Group', although he opposed the use of 'extraordinary measures' in 1928.
42. Pierre Broué, *Le Parti Bolchevique; Histoire du Parti Communiste de l'U.R.S.S.* (Paris, 1971) p. 337.
43. Most of the information about the 'Ryutin platform' came from 'The Letter of an Old Bolshevik'. B. Nicolaevsky, *Power and the Soviet Elite*, p. 28.
44. Vaksberg, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1988, p. 13.
45. Vaksberg, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1988, p. 13 and *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, pp. 103–115. The latter is more reliable and provides a good deal more information about the membership and activities of the 'Ryutin Group'.

46. Quoted in Vaksberg, p. 13.
47. *ibid.*
48. *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 106 (not quoted in Vaksberg, who is generally more cautious).
49. The 'stabilised' rouble, introduced to combat inflation in July 1922.
50. Quoted in Vaksberg, p. 13.
51. *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 111.
52. A Soviet party member interviewed in Moscow by the author in 1986 recalled 'evenings' at Ryutin's flat, which became a centre for political debate from 1928 onwards.
53. *Izvestiya TsK*, 1989, no. 6, pp. 103–5. The list is similar to the one provided by the resourceful Medvedev (*Let History Judge*, p. 142).
54. *Iz. TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 105.
55. Broué, *Le Parti Bolchevique*, p. 338.
56. *Iz. TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 105.
57. Broué, 'Trotsky et le Bloc des Oppositions', p. 14, and *Iz TsK*, 1989, no. 6, p. 105.
58. Serge, *Vie et Mort de Trotsky*, p. 220.
59. *Byulleten' Oppozitsii*, no. 9, February–March 1930, and L. Trotsky, 'Is Stalin Weakening the Soviets?', *New York Times*, 8 May 1932.
60. Karl Radek, for example, who had returned to the party in 1929, remarked that 'at this fast rate industrialisation would produce no results, but would only cause huge expenditure'. Quoted in Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution, Politics and Workers, 1928–1932* (New York, 1988) p. 313.
61. L. Trotsky, *Soviet Economy in Danger* (New York, 1932), cited in *Not Guilty! Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Charges made against Leon Trotsky* (2nd edn, New York, 1972) pp. 265–6.
62. The most detailed account of this, which draws on material released from the Trotsky Archive in the last decade, is Pierre Broué's 'Trotsky et le Bloc des Oppositions'.
63. See Broué, 'Trotsky et le Bloc des Oppositions'.
64. A careful examination of the evidence, supplemented by interviews with Trotsky, led the Dewey Commission to conclude at least that no alliance with Zinovievist 'capitulators' had been formed in 1932. *Not Guilty!* pp. 35–48.
65. *Byulleten' Oppozitsii*, no. 27, March 1932, quoted in I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky 1929–40* (London, 1963) p. 168.
66. The letter appeared in *Byulleten' Oppozitsii*, no. 28, June 1932. Cited in Broué, p. 17.
67. I. Deutscher, *Stalin, a Political Biography* (2nd edn, London, 1979) p. 334.
68. Broué; and Kuromiya, p. 313.
69. Broué, 'Trotsky et le Bloc des Oppositions', p. 21.
70. Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast*, pp. 174–5.
71. Broué, p. 24.

72. One of the most vivid accounts of this 'quicksand society' is Moshe Lewin's. See in particular, 'Society, State and Ideology During the First Five Year Plan', reprinted in his *The Making of the Soviet System*, pp. 209–40.
73. Cited in Broué, p. 21.
74. Quoted by Trotsky in *The Revolution Betrayed*, trans. Max Eastman (New York, Pioneer edn, 1957) p. 100.
75. Trotsky again, cited in Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast*, p. 309.
76. Ryutin, cited in Vaksberg.
77. For a discussion of growing working-class hostility towards the regime after mid-1929, see John Barber, 'Soviet Workers and the State, 1928–1941', unpublished paper presented to the conference of the National Association for Soviet and East European Studies, 27–29 March 1982, pp. 12–13.

## 5 PARTY STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

1. See R. Sakwa, *Soviet Communists in Power: A Study of Moscow during the Civil War* (London, 1988) ch. 4.
2. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh* (Moscow, 1953) vol. 2, pp. 778–9.
3. *ibid.*, p. 124.
4. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh*, pt i, p. 656.
5. The party apparatus ritually condemned the practice of appointments from above, describing them as unfortunate necessities where the cell lacked vigour. P, 25 May 1929.
6. An example like this was used by Anatoly Rybakov in his novel *Children of the Arbat* (trans H. Shukman, Toronto, 1988) p. 372.
7. The control commissions, of which the Central Control Commission was the highest body, were responsible, in theory, for checking the party's work to prevent 'bureaucratic excesses'. They were independent of the party apparatus, and no member of a party committee could serve on them, although movement between the two was common. Disputes between the control commissions and the equivalent party organs would be placed before a joint session of the two, and could eventually end up on the agenda of local party conferences. For control in general, see E. A. Rees, *State Control in Soviet Russia* (London, 1987).
8. The question of central influence over appointments and personnel is discussed in detail in ch. 9, especially pp. 191–2.
9. 29 July 1926. This and the next resolution are described in N.S. Davydova, introduction, p. 56.
10. 26–27 July 1927.
11. 18 October 1928.
12. Such as the two reports on Krasnaya Presnya, 1928 and 1930. P, 10 October 1928, and *Dokladnaya zapiska v TsK VKP(b) o vypolnenii reshenii TsK po Krasnopresnenskomu raionu* (Moscow, 1930).

13. *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo* (PS) 1931, no. 8, and TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 8 (file on Serp i Molot).
14. K. Ya. Bauman, *General'naya bol'shevistskaya liniya i nasha rabota*, p. 94.
15. This point was also made by Fainsod in his study of Smolensk. 'As a representative of the *Oblast*', he wrote, 'the *Oblast*' secretary had to press for allocations of supplies to the *Oblast*', for budgetary appropriations which would enable him to fulfil the commitments which the centre imposed on him.' *Smolensk Under Soviet Rule*, p. 76.
16. Molotov and Mikoyan were regular visitors at the Krasnyi Proletarii factory, for example, and Kaganovich took a close interest in Serp i Molot. TsGAOR, loc. cit., and 7952/3/94, 84.
17. *IV plenum MK* (Moscow, 1929) pp. 115–16.
18. This was a return to former practice. Moscow had been separate from its province until May 1920.
19. The *oblispolkom* was the executive committee of the Soviet, responsible for the 'government' of Moscow much as a local authority might be in Britain.
20. RM, 22 February 1931.
21. The party met at 3 pm, the Soviet at 4 pm, on 23 February. RM, 25 February 1931.
22. *ibid.*
23. A full list of the new MGK appeared in RM, 27 February 1931.
24. Trusts, which existed at all-Union, national and regional levels, were responsible for the running of groups of factories within given industries. Thus *Mashinotrest* was responsible for the machine-tool industry, *Moskhimtrest* for the Moscow chemical industry, etc.
25. Likhachev, for example, the director of the AMO plant in Moscow, was both a charismatic and assertive personality and the head of one of the nation's key plants. He was also allegedly a personal friend of Khrushchev's in the 1930s. *Khrushchev Remembers*, vol. 1, p. 86.
26. The party rules, amended at the thirteenth Congress, stipulated that provincial organisations should hold conferences twice a year, but this requirement was not invariably observed in Moscow. The Moscow Party held the following conferences in this period: thirteenth Conference, January 1925; fourteenth Conference, December 1925; fifteenth Conference, January 1927; sixteenth Conference, November 1927; seventeenth Conference, March 1929; first *Oblast*' Conference, September 1929; second *Oblast*' Conference, June 1930; first Moscow city Conference, February 1931; third *Oblast*' and second city Conference, January 1932.
27. For example the party rules specified that it was the conference which 'revises and alters the party programme and rules', but in October 1928 Polonskii altered the rules for electing local cell bureau members in Moscow without reference to any other body. P, 10 October 1928.
28. No secret was made of the fact that they were in fact appointed in advance.
29. In 1924, Uglanov, as second secretary, was responsible for party matters, while Mikhailov, the third secretary, was in charge of economic questions.

Kotov, who became second secretary in 1925, took particular responsibility for party propaganda and education. Under Bauman, in 1929, Polonskii, the second secretary, was responsible for organisational and party questions, while Leonov reported on economic issues.

30. P, 18 January 1927.
31. In September 1929 (see appendix 1). Essentially the MK buro's membership does not seem to have differed from that of the Smolensk party committee buro. (Fainsod, *Smolensk*, pp. 67–8.)
32. This was especially true for economic questions. See chapter 8.
33. The party authorised appointments to positions in most strategic areas, including the economy and the state apparatus. The posts, which were filled by candidates from lists approved by the *orgraspredotdel*, were considered to be within the party's control, or *nomenklatura*. See chap. 9, pp. 191–2.
34. The most thorough account of this *otdel* is given by N.E. Rosenfeldt, *Knowledge and Power: the Role of Stalin's Secret Chancellery in the Soviet system of Government* (Copenhagen, 1976). Rosenfeldt suggests that the secret *otdel* had disappeared from the Central Committee apparatus in or soon after 1930. This seems unlikely in view of the fact that a secret department was quoted at the third Moscow *oblast'* conference in January 1932. Possibly Rosenfeldt was misled here by the unreliable Avtorkhanov, whose work contains several outright fabrications. The secrecy of the *otdel* also militates against a thorough study of it. So secret was the *pomoshchnik's* work, for example, that no holder of that post in Moscow features in the party press or on the lists of buro members, although the Conference reports of 1930 and 1932 name them as Shurov and Kryskii respectively.
35. *K XVI S"ezdu. Materialy k organizatsionnomu otchetu TsK VKP(b)*, no. 1 (Moscow, 1930).
36. P, 17 March 1928.
37. The same principle applied for *raikom* instructors. See V.P. Pospekhov, 'Deyatel'nost' moskovskoi partiinoi organizatsii po dal'neishemu razvitiyu vnutripartiinoi demokratii v gody pervoi pyatiletki, 1928–32 gg', *Aftoreferat Dissertatsii* (Moscow, 1976) p. 24.
38. *Sbornik vazhneishikh postanovlenii MK i MGK VKP(b) (Material k IV oblastnoi i III gorodskoi konferentsiei VKP(b))* (Moscow, 1934) pp. 546–50.
39. PS, 1930, no 2, p. 10.
40. P, 8 February 1930.
41. Nationally party membership figures were: 1 January 1930, 1 677 910 members and candidates; 1 January 1932, 3 117 250 (T.H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the Soviet Union*, p. 52); for Moscow, the corresponding figures for the *oblast'* as a whole were 226 333 and 395 104, and for the city alone, 135 888 and 225 554 (*Moskovskaya gorodskaya i moskovskaya oblastnaya organizatsiya KPSS v tsifrakh* (Moscow, 1972) p. 28). For more information on party membership, see chapter 6.
42. *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS* (Moscow, 1983) vol 2, p. 384.
43. These were the grain growing *raions* sector (responsible for 20 *raions*), the

- cottage industry sector (24), the milk and livestock sector (20), the flax sector (23), the heavy industry sector (10), the light industry sector (23) and the heat and energy sector (9). PS, 1931, no. 21.
44. PS, 1931, no. 21.
  45. See, e.g., P, 10 October 1928.
  46. RM, 14 December 1930.
  47. Originally three extra *raions* were proposed: Butyrki, to be carved out of Krasnaya Presnya; Ostanskii, to be drawn from parts of Sokol'niki and Krasnaya Presnya *raion*; and Blagu-Lefortovo, to come mainly from Bauman *raion*. These names were taken from villages which Moscow now incorporated, but for this reason they were deemed to be unsuitable for a socialist city, and, ostensibly at the suggestion of workers in local factories, they were changed, and a new *raion* added, in the final plan approved in December 1930. The final *raions* were Bauman, Stalin, Oktyabr'skii, Krasnaya Presnya, Sokol'niki, Dzerzhinskii, Frunze, Lenin, Proletarskii and Zamoskvorech'e. P, 9 January 1931.
  48. V.F. Starodubtsev, 'Deyatel'nost' moskovskoi partiinoi organizatsii po razvitiyu obshchestvenno-politicheskoi aktivnosti rabochego klassa v gody pervoi pyatiletki, 1928–32 gg'. Candidate dissertation (Moscow, 1972) p. 86.
  49. For examples, see RM, 18, 19 and 24 December 1926.
  50. Sakwa, p. 100.
  51. *ibid.*, p. 112. The move was controversial, and fuelled the debate between 'strict centralisers' (including, at this stage, Kaganovich and Kotov) and the Democratic Centralists and other Bolshevik left-wing groups.
  52. The tutelage of city organisations over rural areas, first aimed at bringing the peasants closer to the regime and then used for collectivising their farms.
  53. For an example of this, see P, 15 July 1926.
  54. The rules for primary party organisations in this period were set out at the fourteenth Party Congress. See *Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU*, vol. 2, 1917–29. Ed. R. Gregor (Toronto, 1974) p. 278.
  55. The figures were 36.2 per cent in the spring of 1928 and 37.7 per cent in the autumn. *Partiinoe, khozyaistvennoe i kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo v Moskve i gubernii. Sbornik diagramm* (Moscow, 1929) p. 28.
  56. Iz TsK, 1925, no. 4.
  57. *ibid.*, 1926, nos 33–4.
  58. *ibid.* Not all secretaries were elected. Many were appointed by the *raikom* or factory committee.
  59. *ibid.*
  60. *ibid.*, no. 4.
  61. *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii*, 1st edn, p. 431.
  62. G.D. Safronova, 'Deyatel'nost' pervychnykh partiinykh organizatsii goroda Moskvy po rekonstruktsii tyazheloi promyshlennosti, 1928–32', Candidate dissertation (Moscow, 1975) p. 37. In 1931 these rights were extended to all shop cells.



63. E. Kolokol'tseva, *Bol'shevik*, 1928, no. 12.
64. RM, 4 March 1931.
65. *Bol'shevik*, 1928, no. 10.
66. *Izvestiya MK*, 1926, no. 1.
67. PS, 1931, no. 31.
68. PS, 1931, no. 3.
69. This was not the *grupporg*'s fault. Nobody was very clear about who should be doing what in the primary organisations. An article in *Izvestiya TsK* in 1927, for example, emphasized the need for *grupporgs* to concentrate on the party members in their groups, while in 1929, *Sputnik Kommunist* was urging them to pay more attention to the non-party. *Iz Tsk*, 1927, nos 14–15; SK, 1929, nos 1–2.
70. PS, 1930, no. 17.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. PS, 1930, no. 3–4.
74. PS, 1930, no. 17.
75. SK, 1929, no. 15.
76. RM, 27 March 1928.
77. TsGAOR, 7952/3/96, 76.
78. In the Parizhskaya Kommuna factory, for example, more than 10 per cent of members in one shop had not paid for up to 10 months. PS, 1930, no. 24.
79. PS 1931, no. 1.
80. PS 1930, no 21. This is a point which Chase overlooks in his eagerness to find 'forums' in which workers' grievances and demands could be voiced. Chase, pp. 298–9.
81. P, 7 June 1932.
82. Starodubtsev, p. 54. The breakdown was shop and shift cells, 3171; link cells, 588; party groups, 11 521.
83. *Moskovskaya gorodskaya i Moskovskaya oblastnaya organizatsiya*, table 15, p. 158.
84. *ibid.*, p. 28.
85. Uglanov referred to this problem at the fifteenth Moscow Party conference. *XV Moskovskaya Gubernskaya Konferentsiya VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1927) p. 359.
86. S. Filatov, *Partrabota na zavode Serp i Molot* (Moscow, 1931) p. 23.

## 6 PARTY MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT IN MOSCOW

1. SK, 1930, no. 31.
2. For an example, see RM, 10 January 1927.
3. For a discussion of the rural party, see Daniel Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Rural Communist Party* (London, 1988). Thorniley describes how the party's coverage of the villages improved slightly in the late 1920s.

However, the recruitment of peasants, as he explains, was never the priority worker recruitment was to become in industrial areas.

4. Membership statistics were not entirely reliable because of accounting problems, and grew more difficult to assess during the first Five Year Plan. This must be borne in mind when considering official figures.
5. *Sotsial'nyi i natsional'nyi sostav VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 26.
6. T.H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the USSR* (Princeton, 1968) pp. 159–60.
7. Official figures for party composition frequently conflicted at the time.
8. SK, 1927, no. 1, p. 15.
9. P, 25 August 1927.
10. Iz TsK, 20 June 1928.
11. It was characteristic of Stalin that no indication of his social situation was given by his name in these lists. He would have been classed among the *sluzhashchie*.
12. The highest recorded figure was 50.3 per cent. K.Ya. Bauman, *Sotsialisticheskoe nastuplenie i zadachi moskovskoi organizatsii*, report to the January joint plenum of the MK and MKK (Moscow, 1930) p. 76.
13. *III oblastnaya i II gorodskaya konferentsiya*, bulletin no. 3, p. 42.
14. A report of 1930, looking at the *aktiv* in the factories as a whole, found that 84.2 per cent were workers by social situation and 72.5 per cent by current occupation. This survey, however, covered all activists, including *grupporgs* and other unpaid party workers. SK, 1930, no. 6, p. 24.
15. Approximately 70 per cent of cell buro members were workers in the 1920s, compared with 80 per cent of secretaries. SK, 1927, nos 19–20, p. 95; RM, 5 November 1925; and *Partiinoe, khozyaistvennoe i kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo v Moskve i gubernii. Sbornik diagramm* (Moscow, 1929) p. 28.
16. PS, 1931, nos 10–11. The figure of 55.6 per cent is quoted for the party as a whole in 1931.
17. *I moskovskaya oblastnaya konferentsiya VKP(b), stenograficheskii otchet* (Moscow, 1930) vol. 2, p. 65.
18. V.F. Starodubtsev, pp. 85–6.
19. Nationally the size of the party was 304.9 per cent of its 1924 membership in 1928, while the Moscow organisation had only increased to 290 per cent. *Partiinoe, khozyaistvennoe i kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo*, introduction, diagram 2.
20. A total of 801 804 members and candidates. Rigby, p. 52.
21. Iz TsK, 1925, nos 15–16.
22. Examples of such articles can be found in Iz TsK, 1925, nos 36–7 and RM, 6 October 1925. 'Political literacy' obviously included basic familiarity with Marxist and Leninist texts, and for many new recruits, some of whom could scarcely read, this presented difficulties. Those who repeatedly failed to satisfy their teachers also included workers whose image of the party did not coincide with the current orthodoxy, however. The official

language, which suggests that workers who would not reproduce current formulae were simply dunces, is thus misleading. See chapter 7, p. 153.

23. One of the reasons for it was the need to demonstrate rural support for the party at a time when the opposition was claiming that the peasant represented a hostile capitalist element. Rigby in particular emphasises this aspect of the issue, stating that 'the mass intake of peasants was a logical consequence of Stalin's realignment with the 'Right' in this period' (p. 136).
24. 'Ours is a working class party', he said. 'Workers should predominate in it. This is a reflexion of the fact that we have a dictatorship of the proletariat. But it is clear that, without a union with the peasantry, a dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible, and that a given percentage of the best people from the peasantry in the membership of the party is an essential anchor for the party in the countryside. Things are still not so good on this point'. Quoted in Rigby, p. 151.
25. In 1925 the proportion of peasants by current occupation in the party as a whole was 9.5 per cent, in 1926, 13.4 per cent and in 1927, 13.7 per cent. The proportion by social situation fell in these years, from 28.8 per cent in 1924 to 25.9 per cent in 1926 and 27.3 per cent in 1927. Rigby, p. 116.
26. SK 1927, no. 1 p. 12.
27. Davydova, p. 384.
28. SK 1927, no. 7, p. 8.
29. See Ryutin's speech in RM, 10 January 1927.
30. A further reason was the political effect of the recent peasant enrolment, which had drawn mainly richer peasants into the party. Increased proletarian enrolment naturally reduced the proportionate share of peasants. Rigby, pp. 172–3.
31. Rigby, p. 116.
32. *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (7th edn, 1953) vol. 2, pp. 420–8.
33. See, for example, the articles on workers leaving the party in PS, no. 6, March 1932, and on training recruits, PS, no. 7, April 1932.
34. Rigby, pp. 185–6.
35. The highest proportion of workers nationally was 46.3 per cent in 1930. Thereafter the increased enrolment of other social groups and the steady promotion of workers into white-collar jobs (see chapter 9), reduced the proportion of workers, although total recruitment was higher than ever. Rigby, p. 116.
36. Quoted in *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii KPSS, 1883–1965* (1st edn, 1966) p. 422.
37. Rigby, p. 158. For many white-collar employees party membership was a pre-requisite for promotion.
38. Another method of restricting the number of white-collar workers in the party was the introduction of quotas for new recruits. SK, 1927, no. 18.
39. See introduction. Textiles still accounted for more than half of Moscow's

output in 1930.

40. Women accounted for more than half of Moscow's population, but only 18 per cent of the party organisation in 1927, a proportion which fell in the years of mass recruitment which followed. *Moskovskaya gorodskaya i moskovskaya oblastnaya organizatsiya KPSS v tsifrakh*, p. 133.
41. As Polonskii explained in 1928, 'In Moscow *guberniya*, the party layer among textile workers is 5.2 per cent; 95 per cent of our textile workers are not members of the party'. The comparative figures for the textile industry in other areas were: Leningrad, 12 per cent; Ukraine, 10 per cent; Yaroslavl' *guberniya*, 7.6 per cent; Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, 5.4 per cent. SK, 1928, no. 12.
42. In Moscow the 'party layer' in the metal industries in 1927 was 14 per cent, compared with 19 per cent in Tula *guberniya*, 23.8 per cent in Leningrad and 30 per cent in Saratov *guberniya*. Ibid.
43. Among the exceptions was the giant textile works, Prokhorovskaya Trekhgornaya Manufaktura, which continued to operate in the Soviet period. Its workforce in 1928 totalled 7258, of whom 6601 were workers. *Fabriki i zavody moskovskoi oblasti na 1928–29 god* (Moscow, 1929) p. 126.
44. SK 1927, no. 1, p. 13.
45. SK, 1930, no. 3.
46. In 1929 the political attitudes of workers who lived in rural areas in the Central Industrial Region, which included the Moscow *oblast'*, were the subject of a general study by N. Semenov. His findings indicate that Moscow's rural workers were typical of those in other similar areas. *Litso fabrichnykh rabochykh prozhivayushchikh v derevnyakh i politprosvetrabota sredi nikh* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929).
47. In 1932 workers who had started their career since 1921 accounted for about 42 per cent of Moscow's workforce. V.F. Starodubtsev, p. 40.
48. SK, 1929, no. 23, p. 47.
49. *Propagandist*, October 1928, p. 110.
50. Petrograd's Bolshevik workers were mainly skilled metalworkers employed in the city's large factories. They had been engaged in industrial work since before 1914, and had experienced an intense phase of labour activism during the years 1912–14. See D. Mandel, *The Petrograd Workers and the Fall of the Old Regime* (London, 1984) pp. 45–8.
51. 65 per cent of workers in Serp i Molot in 1929 had joined the workforce since the Revolution, 15 per cent in 1928 alone.
52. Chase, p. 86.
53. SK, 1927, no. 5, p. 27.
54. RM, 20 October 1925.
55. The administrative problems caused by this steady drain were such that many officials attempted to resist the draft, 'hoarding' their best cadres for work nearer home. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 152. It was also not the first time that Moscow's attempts to mobilise volunteers for national campaigns had fallen short of official requirements (see text, p. 40).

- 'Hoarding', rather than residual 'rightism' may have been the main reason for Moscow's poor record in filing its quota of '25,000ers' in 1929. On this subject, see L. Viola, 'The 25,000ers: a Study of a Soviet Recruitment Campaign during the First Five Year Plan', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 1983, no. 1, pp. 14–16.
56. The official quotas were: Ukraine, 7500; Moscow, 6600; Leningrad, 4390. *ibid.*, p. 9.
  57. PS, 1931, no. 14.
  58. See the article by Gutman in SK, 1927, no. 1.
  59. VI plenum MK (Moscow, 1925). See also above, pp. 32–3.
  60. P, 21 December 1926.
  61. SK, 1930, nos. 19–20.
  62. The Russian phrase *obshchestvennaya rabota*, 'social work', covers any voluntary work carried out on behalf of society, from voluntary farm labouring to participation in local government.
  63. L. Gaidul', *Litsom k proizvodstvu, Opyt raboty partkomiteta zavoda Serp i Molot* (Moscow, 1930) p. 118.
  64. A report of the work of the *orgaspredotdel*, including this aspect, appears in RM, 17 January 1925.
  65. Faliks, the secretary of the Krasnyi Proletarii cell, noted that the 'individual approach' was a rarity even in the 1920s. TsGAOR, 7952/3/96, 83. After 1928, as the pressure of production targets absorbed virtually all the factory cells' time, the situation deteriorated even further.
  66. Davydova, p. 377.
  67. Starodubtsev, p. 61.
  68. SK, 1927, no. 18, p. 49.
  69. SK, 1929, no. 16, p. 32.
  70. TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 11–12. This casts doubts over Gaidul's vaunted 'individual approach' of the previous year.
  71. RM, 1 January 1927.
  72. P, 2 April 1926.
  73. SK, 1928, no. 16.
  74. In 1925 party dues were calculated at an average of 7 per cent of wages, although the unemployed were not expected to contribute.
  75. SK, 1927, nos 23–4.
  76. *Bol'shevik* (B), 1925, nos 21–2, pp. 61–74. The pressures of party life were a problem at all levels. Molotov apparently complained to Khrushchev about the fact that he never had time to read a book. *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 65.
  77. *Martenovka*, 21 September 1928. Quoted in TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 14.
  78. *Martenovka*, 7 February 1928. Quoted in *ibid.*, 1.13.
  79. RM, 10 September 1927.
  80. K.Ya. Bauman, *General'naya Bol'shevistskaya liniya i nasha rabota* (Moscow, 1929) p. 96.
  81. TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 20.

82. SK, 1929, no. 30.
83. RM, 10 September 1927.
84. Bauman, p. 96.
85. TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 11.
86. TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 122.
87. In Trekhgornaya Manufaktura, for example, *otsev* in 1928 led to an overall drop in the number of party members, with 159 members leaving and only 100 new ones joining the party. However, even this represented a fall of only 2.4 per cent. P, 5 August 1928. In such local cases, disputes in the factory or industry affected were often the cause of the problem.
88. P, 29 June 1928.
89. Iz TsK, 1926, no. 37–8.
90. SK 1927, no. 7, p. 8.
91. SK 1927, no. 1, p. 10.
92. *Partiinoe, khoziaistvennoe i kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo*, p. 19.
93. PS 1932, no. 10.
94. RM, 24 September 1925.
95. P, 6 October 1925. See also PS 1931, nos 3–4.
96. Yu.A. V'yunov, *Deyatel'nost' moskovskoi organizatsii VKP(b) po sovershenstvovaniyu partiinoi propagandy v gody pervoi pyatiletki (Aftoreferat dissertatsii, Moscow, 1972)* p. 14. In 1932 64.9 per cent of candidates were educated in the schools.
97. Rigby, pp. 190–92.
98. RM, 28 December 1932.
99. *Partiinoe, khoziaistvennoe i kul'turnoe stroitel'stvo*, p. 28.
100. PS, 1932, no. 6.
101. This contrasted with the situation in the higher levels of the apparatus. See pp. 207–8.
102. TsGAOR 7952/3/96, 89–90.
103. The career of Victor Kravchenko is typical. Although he later defected, Kravchenko was a dedicated Bolshevik in the 1920s, drawn to the party by his desire to build socialism in practical ways as well as by the attractions of promotion. V. Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom* (London, 1947).
104. W. Duranty, *I Write as I Please*, p. 201.

## 7 'POLITICAL EDUCATION', AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA

1. See P. Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilisation, 1917–1929* (Cambridge University Press, 1985) part I. A useful Soviet source for urban propaganda in the Civil War period, though noticeably pre-*glasnost*, is A.P. Kupaigorodskaya, *Oruzhiem slova: listovki petrogradskikh bolshevikov 1918–1920 gg* (Leningrad, 1981).
2. Kenez correctly points out (p. 8) that there was no Soviet Goebbels.

Equally, there were no campaign managers to rival those who engineered George Bush's publicity during the 1988 American presidential campaign.

3. The range of reading is discussed on pp. 150–1. The type of audience within the party that propagandists were addressing is one of the questions which Kenez does not explore. Without this dimension, however, it is impossible to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of propaganda campaigns.
4. The development of basic literacy was one of the attractions of the party's education programme in the 1920's. RM, 29 May 1926.
5. See Kenez, p. 8.
6. Narkompros was the Commissariat for Education, or 'Enlightenment', Glavpolitprosvet the Department for Political Education. Both are examined by Kenez (pp. 123–4), who describes their structures and duties.
7. See text, p. 160. There must be doubt about the assertion that 'the [propaganda] schools with their catechism-like method transmitted a way of thinking, which assumed that there was one and only one correct answer to any question' (Kenez, p. 133, referring to the 1920s). In Moscow, at least, heated arguments took place at propaganda schools, and the simple-minded 'catechism' style was not universally followed before 1932.
8. The secretaries of the MK APPO in our period were V.G. Knorin, N.N. Mandel'shtam, N.N. Popov, E.S. Kogan and then a series of short-term appointments to the reformed *agitmass* and *kul'tprop otdely*.
9. N.S. Davydova, p. 404.
10. See I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed*, pp. 135–6.
11. The notion originated with Lenin. As he put it, 'The illiterate person stands outside politics. First it is necessary to teach him the alphabet'. *Soch.*, vol. 44, p. 174, cited in Kenez, p. 145.
12. Diane Koenker (p. 60) estimates that in 1912, 81 per cent of men and 57 per cent of women were 'literate' (quoting *Ezhemesyachnyi statisticheskii byulleten'*, 1915, no. 10, pp. 27–30). These figures would suggest that Bolshevik gains in the early 1920s (when the influx of workers from the countryside increased the overall number of illiterates) were significant, though not spectacular.
13. Figure for party members and candidates, quoted in *Iz TsK*, 1925, nos 43–4.
14. Davydova (p. 677). Her statistics also indicate local fluctuations, for example within industries. She suggests that high levels of illiteracy were to be found where women predominated. According to her statistics, 27.2 per cent of workers in the Krasnaya Roza textile factory and 12.1 per cent in the Babaeva chocolate factory were illiterate.
15. TsGAGM, 415/2/201, 2.
16. V.A. Kumanev, *Sotsializm i vsenarodnaya gramotnost'* (Moscow, 1967) p. 161.
17. *Sluzhashchie* included office workers and clerks, technical personnel (ITR)

and also certain categories of cleaners, doormen, and ancillary staff. See chapter 6, p. 118.

18. On average about a third of those who enrolled failed to complete the course. See note 75, below.
19. The percentages for members and candidates were as follows:
 

Graduates of Communist Universities ( <i>Komvuzy</i> )	0.3
Completed courses at Party Schools ( <i>Sovpartshkoly</i> )	5.9
Completed courses at political literacy schools ( <i>shkoly politgramoty</i> )	
In urban areas	29.2
In rural areas	5.5
- Percentages based on figures in E. Smitten, p. 63.
20. G. Gak, *Za kachestvo propagandista (soderzhanie i metody raboty nad povysheniem kvalifikatsii propagandista)* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929) p. 8.
21. *IV plenum MK* (1925) p. 24. The work counted towards students' *obshchestvennaya rabota* and was virtually compulsory.
22. See also Kenez, p. 131.
23. Davydova, p. 424.
24. N. Maslova, *Agitprop-rabota yacheiki na predpriyatii* (Moscow, 1927) pp. 33–4.
25. Davydova, p. 425.
26. A greater commitment of time by students could not be expected, although the Moscow APPO regarded a single weekly class as insufficient. SK, 1929, nos 17–18. p. 45.
27. Maslova, p. 35.
28. Davydova, pp. 425–6.
29. See also Kenez, pp. 130–1.
30. R. Pethybridge, *The Social Prelude to Stalinism* (London, 1974) p. 178, quoting from the Smolensk archive.
31. Central Committee resolution on party education, September 1930. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh* (8th edn) vol. 4, p. 483.
32. The funds for 'circles' in metal workers' clubs were severely cut in the year 1926/7. TsGAOR, 5469/13/305, 26.
33. Maslova, p. 41.
34. First introduced in 1926 in Moscow. *Iz TsK*, 1926, nos 40–1.
35. RM, 1 December 1929.
36. P, 18 October 1928.
37. Davydova, p. 430.
38. John Scott, *Behind the Urals* (London, 1942) p. 40.
39. RM, 4 October 1925.
40. Davydova, p. 430.
41. Davydova, p. 434. The total number of propagandists in the Moscow *guberniya* in 1925 was just over 2000. RM, 14 May 1925.
42. The proportion of workers among graduates of higher education institutions nationally in 1923–4 was only 15 per cent. Gail Warshovsky Lapidus, 'Educational Strategies and Cultural Revolution', in



- S. Fitzpatrick (ed.) *Cultural Revolution in Russia* (Bloomington, Ind., 1978) p. 83.
43. *IV Plenum* (1925) p. 26.
  44. SK, 1929, no. 15.
  45. RM, 14 May 1925.
  46. An example from the Civil War period was D. Yu. Elkina, an ex-Socialist Revolutionary, who wrote one of the most successful pamphlets for teaching literacy, beginning with the famous sentence, ‘*We are not slaves*’ Kenez, p. 79.
  47. SK, 1929, no. 15, p. 39.
  48. P, 3 December 1925.
  49. *Propagandist*, April 1930, nos 13–14, p. 66.
  50. *ibid.*, September 1930, nos 3–4, p. 28.
  51. Kenez, p. 254. In his view, the propagandists were ‘their own first victims’.
  52. *Rabochaya Moskva* noted that of 50 propagandists trained in Bauman raion in 1931, only 30 were still engaged in propaganda work six months later. RM, 4 July 1932.
  53. *Propagandist*, April 1930, nos 13–14, p. 47.
  54. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh* (8th edn) vol. 4, p. 485. This proportion was not achieved.
  55. TsGAOR 7952/3/282, 179.
  56. Gak, p. 19, and TsGAOR, 5467/14/44, 98.
  57. PS, 1931, no. 2.
  58. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union, 1921–1934* (Cambridge, 1979) p. 184. So great was the attraction of ‘technical’ education that most young workers even refused to train as teachers or doctors. Fitzpatrick quotes the Komsomol secretary at the Moscow Instrument Plant, who ‘flatly rejected a request to recruit young workers for study in pedagogical and medical schools. “Our boys won’t go to those VUZy”, he said, “and that’s that.”’
  59. The *Partiinoye Stroitel'stvo* article noted how nine out of ten ‘kids’ might be kept ‘in reserve’ by some factory committees. PS 1931, no. 2.
  60. Davydova, p. 422.
  61. *Propagandist*, September 1930, nos. 3–4, p. 30.
  62. Davydova, p. 410. Among the other texts mentioned were *Azbuka Leninizma* by Kerzhentsev and Leont'ev and Ol'kovskii's textbook of the same title.
  63. *Propagandist*, 1929, no. 1, p. 40.
  64. *ibid.*, 1929, no. 2.
  65. As late as 1929 readers interested in Bukharin's ‘errors’ were still being referred to his *Notes of an Economist*, for example. No reference to the works of ‘oppositionists’ like Syrtsov and Lominadze or Ryutin would appear after the conflicts of the next three years.
  66. On this, see John Barber, ‘Stalin's Letter to the Editors of *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya*’, *Soviet Studies*, 1976, no. 1, especially pp. 35–7, which deal

specifically with propaganda.

67. *Propagandist*, 1930, nos 13–14, p. 50.
68. Scott, p. 41.
69. SK 1929, nos 17–18.
70. *IV Plenum*, p. 19.
71. *Propagandist*, 1930, nos 13–14, p. 50.
72. RM, 29 May 1926.
73. Davydova, p. 462.
74. Maslova, pp. 27–9.
75. This figure is based on several accounts of *otsev* among party students, including studies of Zamoskvorech'e and Krasnaya Presnya raions in 1929. SK, 1929, no. 15; *Dokladnaya Zapiska*, p. 47.
76. RM, 4 July 1932.
77. PS, 1932, no. 9.
78. Jeffrey Brooks, 'The Breakdown in the Production and Distribution of Printed Material, 1917–1927', in *Bolshevik Culture*, ed. Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez and Richard Stites (Bloomington, Ind., 1985) p. 164.
79. Such as Trotsky's expulsion from the party and his subsequent exile. See chap. 8, p. 185.
80. Barber, 'Stalin's Letter to the Editors of *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya*', p. 35.
81. *Partden' na predpriyatii* (Moscow, 1933) p. 6.
82. RM, 25 May 1924 and 20 September 1925.
83. The most thorough public stage in this investigation was the 'day' in June 1931 when a city-wide survey of party schools was conducted by the MK. RM, 24 May 1931.
84. See the excellent account in R.O.G. Urch, *The Rabbit King of Russia* (London, 1939).
85. *Partden' na predpriyatii*, pp. 3–6.
86. *ibid.*, p. 10.
87. The booklet, *Partden' na predpriyatii*, was devoted to Elektroavtomat, and intended as a means of generalising the factory's experience.
88. PS, 1932, nos 11–12.
89. RM, 7, 9 and 26 June 1932.
90. TsGAOR, 7952/3/490, 42.
91. The circulation of *Vechernyaya Moskva* in 1928 was approximately 84 000 and of *Moskovskaya Derevnnya*, 50 000. Davydova, p. 408.
92. TsGAOR 7952/3/253, 21.
93. Laz'yan edited the paper in 1929, but was replaced by L. Murafer on 15 June 1930. Murafer was replaced by Kövalev ten days later. These details were printed on the final page of the paper.
94. PS, 1930, nos 3–4.
95. RM, 26 May 1925. Its readership had declined even further by 1929. According to *Partiinoye Stroitel'stvo*, its print run was only 7500 by the end of the year. PS, 1930, nos 3–4.
96. PS, 1931, no. 8.

97. The problems of *Martenovka* are discussed in TsGAOR 7952/3/253, 5. In 1930 it was attacked in *Pravda* for its uncritical articles, low circulation, and failure to carry out its own plans. P, 30 January 1930.
98. TsGAOR 7952/3/253 for *Martenovka* and 7952/3/87 for *Dvigatel'*.
99. TsGAOR 7952/3/253, 6–7.
100. An unusually self-critical account of why workers did not join the party appeared in *Martenovka* in 1928, for example.
101. TsGAOR 7952/3/253, 6.
102. *Informatsionnaya spravka o rukovodstve partiyacheek stengazetami. Sostavlena po materialam Sokol'nicheskogo, Zamoskvoretskogo, Baumanskogo, Khamovnicheskogo RK, Bogorodskogo i Orekhovo-Zuevskogo UK i MRKI* (Moscow, 1928) p. 1. The factory which failed most signally in this respect was the Tormoznyi zavod, whose 'fortnightly' wall newspaper had appeared only four times in 1927.
103. RM, 7 July 1927.
104. This problem was noted in a Central Committee resolution of 21 November 1930. *Pervichnaya partiinaya organizatsiya–dokumenty KPSS* (Moscow, 1970), p. 215. At the local level there were many similar instances, such as that discussed in TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 35.
105. *Grupporgs* were especially prone to neglect such discussions. See RM, 10 February 1927.
106. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 35.
107. A report on agitation in the Zamoskvorech'e raion remarked that the 'haughtiness' of some its members deterred workers from joining the party. SK, 1928, no. 16.
108. *Bol'shevik*, 1927, nos 7–8.
109. *Propagandist*, April 1930, nos 13–14, p. 62.
110. For another discussion of this, see Kenez, p. 135.
111. TsGAOR, 5469/13/305, 26.
112. Starodubtsev, p. 263.
113. The problem of space affected agitation in several ways. In factories whose canteens had been 'reorganised' to provide more space for machinery, workers might have to walk some distance to another canteen, thus cutting down on the time they could spend at meetings or in discussion with comrades at lunchtime. The closing of red corners and libraries was a further problem of the space shortage. See, e.g., TsGAOR, 5469/15/165, 11.1 and 13, where problems at Manometr are discussed.
114. The neglect of the ITR was noted by the Elektro zavod factory organisation in 1929 when it was seen as a serious hindrance to the development of socialist competition. TsGAOR, 7952/3/490, 69.
115. For general comments on this change of policy, see J.F. Hough and M. Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed*, pp. 161–2, and T.H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the USSR*, pp. 190–1.
116. This pattern was noted in the extensive survey of landholding and political attitudes carried out by Semenov in 1929. Landholding alone was less of

- a decisive factor than the frequency with which the subject visited his plot. Absentee landholders showed more willingness to participate in political meetings than did people who visited their plots regularly. Semenov, p. 55.
117. Both of these factors were noted in a *Sputnik Kommunist* survey conducted at the end of 1929. SK, 1930, no. 3.

## 8 THE MOSCOW PARTY ORGANISATION AND MOSCOW INDUSTRY

1. Like many similar giant projects, Sharikopodshipnik experienced severe problems, but it was a flagship of the first Five Year Plan in Moscow.
2. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh*, 8th edn (Moscow, 1970) vol. 3, pp. 17–21.
3. *ibid.*, p. 154.
4. See H. Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution, Politics and Workers, 1928–1932* (New York, 1988) pp. 36–7.
5. For a further discussion of the background to the resolution, see H. Kuromiya, 'Edinonachalie and the Soviet Industrial Manager, 1928–37', *Soviet Studies*, 1984, no. 2. The resolution was dated 5 September 1929.
6. *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh*, 8th edn, vol. 4, pp. 310–11.
7. *ibid.*, p. 313.
8. An example was Stalin's speech of February 1931, 'On the tasks of managers'. J. Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vol. 13 (1951) pp. 29–39. M.M. Kaganovich's view that the 'earth should tremble when the director is entering the factory' is quoted in M. Lewin, *The Making of the Soviet System*, p. 252.
9. *II Plenum MK* (Moscow, 1928) p. 41.
10. P, 7 February 1928.
11. *Fabriki i zavody Moskovskoi oblasti na 1928–29 god* (Moscow, 1929) pp. 104 and 148.
12. Serp i Molot, for example, was attached to MSNKh in 1925, despite the director's opinion that it merited all-Union status. TsGAOR, 7952/3/258, 12.
13. Davydova, p. 100.
14. *Fabriki i zavody Moskovskoi oblasti*, pp. 98 and 184.
15. See, for example, TsGAOR 7952/3/490, 77, referring to Elektrozavod.
16. In 1930 a survey of 20 814 foremen found that 36.5 per cent were party members. *Sostav rukovodyashchikh rabotnikov* (Moscow, 1935) pp. 32–3. Among technicians, however, the figure was lower, about 2 per cent at the end of 1927. N. Lampert, *The Technical Intelligentsia and the Soviet State* (London 1979) p. 24.
17. Stepanov, a former director of the Serp i Molot factory, recalled in 1932 that in 1925 only two members of the factory administration had been

- Communists. Not one foreman had been a party member. To correct this situation, a policy of promoting only Communists was followed in the factory, although after eight months, only two foremen were party members. TsGAOR, 7952/3/258, 21.
18. Yu.I. Suvorov, *Moskovskie Bol'sheviki v bor'be za effektivnost' proizvodstva v tekstil'noi promyshlennosti, 1925–1928 gg.* (aftoreferat dissertatsii, Moscow, 1969) p. 12.
  19. See, e.g., article by Kulikov and Giber, RM, 31 January 1928, and the MK resolution of 28 February 1932, RM 3 March 1932.
  20. Uglanov's attitude towards interference by local cells in economic affairs was an example of the MK siding with management, a phenomenon which became more common after 1931.
  21. This is a feature of party administration also noted by a student of the later Soviet period. J. Hough, *The Soviet Prefects* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969) p. 29.
  22. Davydova, introduction, p. 55.
  23. Several examples of corruption were handled by the MK in 1929, partly because of the concurrent purge. Among the factories affected were Geofizika, in Sokol'niki raion, and Kauchuk, in Krasnaya Presnya.
  24. For example, it heard regular reports on the progress of large plants like AMO and Sharikopodshipnik.
  25. RM, 29 January 1930. For the Podol'sk affair, see text, pp. 76–7.
  26. TsGAOR, 7952/3/94, 183.
  27. *Dinamo v gody stroitel'stvo sotsializma*, vol. 2 (Moscow, 1964) p. 141.
  28. *Istoriya Moskovskogo Avtozavoda imeni I.A. Likhacheva* (Moscow, 1966) pp. 152–4.
  29. TsGAOR, 7952/3/490, 77.
  30. As Filatov recalled, 'Voroshilov in particular swore violently about our mud'. TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 8–9.
  31. RM, 25 April 1926.
  32. *VII Plenum MK* (Moscow, 1926) pp. 9–12.
  33. RM, 20 February 1927.
  34. *Osnovnye resheniya po bor'be s byurokratizmom i uluchsheniyu gosapparata* (Moscow, 1929) p. 4.
  35. Workers from Elektrozavod, mobilised to purge the apparatus of Narkomfin, cut the number of posts from 870 to 674 (May–August 1929). 12 workers from the Elektrozavod (out of a total of 95 promotees) were moved into jobs in the Narkomfin apparatus. V.F. Starodubtsev, p. 173.
  36. William Campbell, a sympathetic observer at the time, recalls how the managing director of Soviet factories had two deputies in 1932, one of whom was appointed by the city Party Committee. His 'sole function', according to Campbell, 'was to watch over the other two... Mostly they were former sailors from the revolutionary navy. The theory was that sailors were supposed to know all about machinery though in fact, with the odd exception, they were simple peasants whose only contact with machinery

- had been washing out the engine rooms of warships', W. Campbell, *Vili the Clown* (London, 1981) p. 28.
37. The workplans for the Krasnaya Presnya *raikom* for July–September 1928 illustrate this point clearly. Of eight items on the programme for the plenum, only one concerned economic affairs, a debate on the prospects for the woollen industry in the *raion*. The buro had a larger programme, consisting of 35 items, 14 of which concerned industry, the majority of these being reports by the directors or party cells of factories in the area. *Plan raboty Krasno-Presnenskogo raikoma VKP(b), iyul'-oktyabr' 1928 g* (Moscow, 1928) pp. 3–4.
  38. *Dokladnaya zapiska v TsK VKP(b) o vypolnenii reshenii TsK po Krasnopresnenskomu raionu* (Moscow, 1930) p. 50.
  39. TsGAOR, 5469/14/45, 11. 4–5.
  40. RM, 3 June 1928.
  41. RM, 27 July 1930.
  42. See John Barber, 'Soviet Workers and the State', p. 4, citing an American engineer who worked in Moscow, Leningrad and the Urals.
  43. The party's domination of the trade unions is emphasised by Davydova in her study of the party's role in industrialisation between 1925 and 1928, p. 591.
  44. Starodubtsev, p. 195.
  45. TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 16.
  46. There is no available systematic information on the number of full-time officials in Moscow factories. Records quote the number of 'activists', but these were mainly people who worked on a voluntary basis. Although factory committee secretaries and shop cell secretaries in large factories were 'relieved from other work', the shortage of full-time officials was clearly a problem, as the use of 'flying squads' to solve problems suggests.
  47. *XV moskovskaya gubernskaya konferentsiya VKP(b)*, p. 359.
  48. *VII plenum MK* (1926) p. 4. Suvorov, writing about the Moscow textile industry and using party archives, remarked that 'in some textile enterprises, the party and trade union organisations did not show the necessary activism in the matter of implementing the regime of economy, they did not involve workers in the struggle for the further improvement and modernisation of the organisation of labour and productivity'. Yu.I. Suvorov, *Bor'ba Kommunisticheskoi Partii za povyslenie proizvodstva v oblasti promyshlennosti* (Yaroslavl', 1972) p. 42.
  49. Suvorov, p. 42. At the plenum, Savvat'ev reported how workers had come to see the regime of economy (*rezhim ekonomiki*) as 'cutting the economy' (*rezhem ekonomiyu*), and regarded it as another measure directed against them by the state. *VII plenum*, p. 68.
  50. Davydova, p. 56.
  51. *Dokumenty trudovoi slavy moskvichei, 1919–1965. Iz istorii bor'by za razvitie kommunisticheskoi form truda. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Moscow, 1967) p. 77.

52. The figures for September/October 1925 showed that on average, half the people attending production conferences in the metal and food processing industries were Communists, and two-thirds of those in the printing industry. The lowest percentages were in areas where party membership was itself low; the textile, construction and chemical industries. *Dokumenty trudovoi slavy*, p. 42.
53. This was particularly the case with expensive proposals, like the regularly mooted suggestion that transport between shops should be mechanised.
54. The rate of implementation is discussed in *Dokumenty trudovoi slavy*. Some of the suggestions for improvements at the Krasnyi Proletarii factory were recalled by engineers in 1932. TsGAOR, 7952/3/94 and 96, *passim*.
55. P, 18 July 1932.
56. *Izvestiya MK*, 1929, nos 1–2, p. 14.
57. P, 28 October 1928.
58. *Voprosy Istorii KPSS* (V I KPSS), 1969, no. 6, p. 88.
59. PS, 1931, no. 1.
60. TsGAOR, 5469/14/242, 20.
61. RM, 10 September 1927.
62. PS, 1930, no. 21.
63. By the middle of 1929, all workers in the party were expected to participate in socialist competition, although there is no evidence that they all did so.
64. RM, 3 September 1927.
65. See Bauman's speech, quoted in I. Gaidul', *Litsom k proizvodstvu. Opyt raboty partkomiteta zavoda 'Serp i Molot'* (Moscow, 1930) p. 22. For an example of the detailed intervention which followed, and was encouraged officially, see RM, 11 January 1932, which refers to party 'troikas' working in the Kauchuk factory.
66. The promotion into other organisations of the 'best' cadres was a recurrent source of complaint after 1928. For technical education and promotion, see chapter 9, pp. 203–4.
67. *V Ob"edinennyi Plenum MK i MKK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 63.
68. TsGAOR, 7952/3/96, 78. Faliks' reminiscences were written down in 1933, after party policy had shifted back in favour of the director's sole power in the economic field.
69. Gaidul', p. 8.
70. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 27. This file consists of notes taken at the meetings of the Krasnyi Proletarii cell buro for the years 1929–30.
71. *ibid.*, 11. 35–40.
72. *ibid.*, 11. 20–1.
73. *ibid.*, 1. 153.
74. When the lamp department in Elektrozavod was destroyed by an explosion, the party committee there reported only that 'socialist competition brought no results in this department'. TsGAOR, 7952/3/490, 42. No criticism of this report was made, and no investigation followed in the Moscow press.
75. This was partly the regime's own fault, for giving prominence in the national

- press to Trotsky's publication, in the West, of articles critical of the USSR. The idea had been to show how inimical he was to the national interest, but these reports suggest that the propaganda move backfired.
76. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 71–5.
  77. The cells' 'lack of responsibility' was one of the main criticisms of them made in Kaganovich's May 1932 speech. PS, 1932, nos 11–12.
  78. Filtzer, *Soviet Workers and Stalinist Industrialisation*, pp. 81–4.
  79. See also Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, p. 264.
  80. TsGAOR, 7952/3/96, 75.
  81. Among their reasons for doubting the reconstruction project were the factory's record of accidents caused by cramped and poorly-ventilated conditions and the desirability of a much larger site than was available at the factory's existing premises.
  82. *Martenovka*, March 1930, quoted in TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 130–3.
  83. *ibid.*, 1.105.
  84. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 56.
  85. A similar campaign was held at Elektrozavod, where relations between the technical personnel and the party had deteriorated during the first half of 1929. TsGAOR, 7952/3/490, 75, which is an account of a technicians' meeting held in Moscow's Meyerhold theatre.
  86. The most famous statement of these new policies was made by Stalin in June 1931. Entitled 'New Conditions – New Tasks in Economic Construction', his speech to a meeting of economic managers outlined 'six points', three of which are described above. The other three were the organised recruitment of the workforce, an end to the disruptive 'unbroken working week' and the reinstatement of *khozraschet* (cost-accounting for each factory). Stalin, *Sochineniya*, vol. 13, pp. 51–80.
  87. P, 7 June 1932.
  88. For example, he quoted a 'hot' shop in the Dinamo factory where drinking water had not been available for six days as a result of *obezlichka*, lack of responsibility.
  89. TsGAOR, 7952/3/267, 13.
  90. M. Lewin, *Making of the Soviet System*, p. 252.
  91. The evidence for widespread enthusiasm among workers in the first half of 1929 is overwhelming. For a discussion of the evidence, see John Barber, 'Soviet Workers and the State, 1928–1941'.

## 9 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND PARTY DEMOCRACY

1. The example quoted by T.H. Friedgut in his study, *Political Participation in the USSR* (Princeton, 1979) pp. 23–4, is the definition given by T.A. Yampolskaya (*Organy sovetskogo gosudarstvennogo upravleniya na sovremennom etape*, Moscow, 1954). According to this, even participation



in socialist competition, mass meetings and production organs amounted to 'political participation'.

2. *ibid.*, p. 26.
3. Just over a third in 1929. SK, 1929, no. 8.
4. From the Tsarist *chinovniki*, officials in the carefully-stratified bureaucracy created by Peter the Great.
5. The problem had existed from the first days of the Revolution, and was the subject of a Central Committee circular letter in May 1918. This stated that 'all party members, regardless of their type of work and the functions they fulfil, must participate directly in party organisations and must not deviate from instructions issued by the corresponding party centre'. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh* (1970 edn) vol. 2, p. 32.
6. The phrase 'bourgeois specialist' was initially used rather than 'intelligentsia' because of the latter's pejorative connotations in the 1920s. Sheila Fitzpatrick, 'Cultural Revolution as Class War', in Fitzpatrick (ed), *Cultural Revolution in Russia* (Bloomington, Ind., 1978) p. 19.
7. V I KPSS, 1963, no. 11, p. 123.
8. PS, 1930, no. 15.
9. Members of the Krasnyi Proletarii factory cell discussed its secretary as if they had the right to veto his appointment by the *raikom* and to propose an alternative. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, 107.
10. These views were all aired by M. Vasil'ev in *Bolshevik*, 1928, no. 8.
11. Voslensky, *La Nomenklatura*, p. 76.
12. RM, 1 April 1927.
13. On the dissolution of local 'cliques' by the use of central *nomenklatura*, see T.H. Rigby, 'Early Provincial Cliques and the Rise of Stalin', *Soviet Studies*, January 1981, no. 1, pp. 24–5.
14. To some extent Stalin cut through this system of interlocking networks of patronage by encouraging the appointment of people with different views to 'balance' each other. An example would be the appointments of Uglanov and Bauman as first and second secretaries of the MK.
15. For promotion policy in general, see Sheila Fitzpatrick (ed.) *Cultural Revolution in Russia*, especially the essays by Fitzpatrick and Lapidus; Jerry F. Hough, *The Soviet Prefects*; Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the USSR* (Cambridge, 1979).
16. SK, 1929, no. 8. The proportion of 'new' employees in Moscow was a little lower than the national average. In the USSR as a whole only 28 per cent of *sluzhashchie* serving in 1929 had been appointed before the Revolution. But Moscow was doing better than Leningrad. The pre-revolutionary capital had the biggest proportion of 'old' bureaucrats, with 52 per cent of its white-collar workers appointed before the Revolution. It should be noted that the category *sluzhashchie* is somewhat misleading. As we saw earlier, it varied over time, and also included people like doormen, office cleaners and shop assistants as well as clerks and office workers. See above, p. 118.

17. The conflict between the two approaches is discussed by Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 328.
18. *II Plenum MK* (1928) p. 43.
19. *Pyatyi ob''edinennyi plenium MK i MKK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1928) p. 31.
20. *KPSS v Rezolyutsiyakh* (1970 edn) vol. 4, pp. 112–13 (Central Committee resolution of 12 July 1928 on the preparation of new specialists).
21. Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility*, pp. 184–6.
22. Yu.I. Suvorov and S.T. Suvorova, *Partiya vo glave tvorcheskoi aktivnosti trudyashchikhsya mass*, vyp. 3 (Yaroslavl, 1976) p. 67.
23. *II Plenum MK*, p. 43. For the social composition of VTUZ (higher institutes of technical education) graduates, see Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility*, p. 188. Approximately one third of students in industrial–transport VTUZy were ‘working class’ in 1927–8.
24. B, 1928, no. 9.
25. RM, 3 March 1929.
26. Vasil'ev considered that it had been ‘somewhat neglected’. *Bolshevik*, 1928, no. 8.
27. *ibid.*
28. PS, 1929, no. 3.
29. N. Lampert, *The Technical Intelligentsia and the Soviet State* (London, 1979) p. 24. The proportion among foremen, who included worker promotees, was higher (about 28 per cent).
30. *Iz TsK*, 1925, no. 34.
31. *ibid.*, 1927, no. 43.
32. SK, no. 8, 1929, p. 78.
33. *ibid.*
34. *Iz TsK*, 1926, nos 16–17.
35. *ibid.*, 1925, no. 34.
36. TsGAOR, 5469/14/45, 7–8.
37. PS, 1930, no. 15.
38. This point was made frequently. See, e.g., PS, 1930, no. 15. The removal, through promotion, of able party activists caused serious problems for administration in Moscow enterprises. SK, 1929, no. 19, pp. 26–7.
39. *Iz TsK*, 1926, nos 16–17.
40. P, 10 April 1926.
41. RM, 13 February 1926.
42. P, 10 April 1926.
43. SK, 1929, no. 3.
44. *Iz TsK*, 1927, no. 43.
45. SK, 1929, no. 8, p. 78.
46. *Iz TsK*, 1927, no. 43.
47. SK, 1929, no. 8.
48. SK, 1929, no. 3.
49. PS, 1930, no. 5.
50. *Cultural Revolution in Russia*, pp. 11–12.

51. E.A. Rees, *State Control in Soviet Russia* (London, 1987) p. 133.
52. RM, 7 September 1926.
53. See chapter 1, p. 36, and Rees, pp. 135–6.
54. See E.H. Carr and R.W. Davies, *Foundations of a Planned Economy*, vol. 1, pt 1, p. 336.
55. The ‘declaration of the eighty-three’ of May 1927 explicitly attacked the cuts for lowering proletarian living standards without making significant economies. See E.H. Carr, *Foundations*, vol. 2, p. 26, and Rees, p. 146.
56. See Bauman’s comments on bureaucratism in the state apparatus, RM, 20 February 1927.
57. RM, 8 September 1927.
58. Rees, pp. 146–7.
59. *Dokumenty trudovoi slavy moskvichei*, pp. 77–8.
60. As one report put it, ‘if the workers [responsible for checking bureaucratic practices] are absorbed into the managerial life of the establishment, they will discuss the problems which are worrying the director, and not those which are worrying the workers’. RM, 8 September 1927.
61. Workers’ continued resistance to rationalization on these grounds was noted by the MK buro in July 1927. *Dokumenty trudovoi slavy moskvichei*, p. 76.
62. Rees, p. 147.
63. V I KPSS, vol. II, 1963, p. 122.
64. Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom*, p. 53.
65. P, 21 and 25 August 1929. The political motive behind the purging of these two institutions was strong. Both were opposed to changes involved in the transition to Stalinist industrialisation, the first on financial grounds, the second because of the new emphasis on technical training under the leadership of VSNKh. This ‘political element’ will be discussed further below.
66. P, 7 August 1929.
67. P, 25 August 1929. The total profits of their speculation were given as 40 million rubles.
68. Especially Gurovich, who was also the secretary of the party cell in Gosbank. P, 15 August 1929.
69. Fitzpatrick, ‘Cultural Revolution as Class War’, in her *Cultural Revolution in Russia*, pp. 23–4.
70. Stalin, an early advocate of the campaign, attempted to restrain *samokritika*. *Sochineniya*, vol. xi, pp. 28 ff., 127–38. The September 1928 plenum of the MK also saw a number of speeches expressing concern about the implications of *samokritika* for party discipline. Among these was that of Kotlubovskii, not later specifically associated with the Right. *Pyatii Ob. Plenum*, p. 108.
71. The affair was recalled by one of the younger participants, Gorbunkov, in TsGAOR, 7952/3/94, 96–9.
72. Both trials involved fantastic accusations against specialists, and were

- conducted as ‘show trials’ in Moscow. The ‘Promparty’, consisting mainly of specialists and VTUZ professors, was accused of sabotage on a wide scale, funded partly from France. See RM, November–December 1930. The Menshevik trial is discussed in *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, March–April 1931.
73. The phrase, quoted by Bauman (RM, 20 August 1929) was Stalin’s. (*Sochineniya*, vol. xi, p. 29).
  74. SK, 1929, no. 3, p. 47.
  75. *I Moskovskaya Oblastnaya Konferentsiya*, p. 130.
  76. *Osnovnye resheniya po bor’be s byurokratizmom i uluchsheniyu gosapparata* (Moscow, 1929) pp. 4–8.
  77. *I Moskovskaya Oblastnaya Konferentsiya*, p. 43.
  78. Bauman, *Sotsialisticheskoe nastupleniye i zadachi moskovskoi organizatsii*.
  79. Efremov, from Elektrozavod, described the cells in Narkomfin as ‘having a rotten smell’ and called for further reviews of the institution. There were many similar examples. *I Moskovskaya Oblastnaya Konferentsiya*, p. 171.
  80. RM, 11 October 1929.
  81. Fitzpatrick describes the purge of the state apparatus as ‘in fact a bureaucratic purge of the bureaucracy, quite efficiently conducted by Rabkrin in the spirit of organisational rationality’. ‘Cultural Revolution as Class War’, p. 27. In the cases of Narkomfin, Gosbank and Narkompros, this is clearly too generous an interpretation.
  82. Starodubtsev, p. 178.
  83. Starodubtsev reports that over a million rubles a year were to be saved by the cuts achieved in the *oblast*. However, the bureaucracy was set for expansion, and any reductions were soon to be cancelled by its continuing overall growth. As Lewin points out (‘Society, State and Ideology during the First Five Year Plan’), most of the purged officials eventually returned to bureaucratic posts of some kind. He quotes Ordzhonikidze’s complaint that ‘every time reductions of personnel and financial economies were decreed the result was bigger expenditure and an increase in the number of officials’. *Cultural Revolution in Russia*, p. 76.
  84. RM, 5 June 1930.
  85. TsGAOR, 7952/3/488, 1.
  86. All these points were raised at a meeting of the *shefstvo* commission on 12 October 1929. TsGAOR, 7952/3/488, 11. 1–7.
  87. *O shefstve predpriyatii nad uchrezhdenii* (Moscow, 1930).
  88. TsGAOR, 5469/15/10, 166.
  89. PS, 1930, no. 15.
  90. Suvorov and Suvorova, p. 68.
  91. TsGAOR, 7952/3/282, 180.
  92. P, 13 January 1930.
  93. TsGAGM, 415/2/201, 1, and RM, 20 April 1931.
  94. Starodubtsev, p. 131.
  95. B, 1929, nos 23–4.

96. PS, 1930, no. 15.
97. PS, 1930, no. 15.
98. Fitzpatrick, *Cultural Revolution*, p. 33.
99. TsGAOR, 7952/3/96, 85–6.
100. Bauman made this point in his speech at the first Moscow *oblast'* conference.
101. P, 3 April 1929.
102. Lampert, p. 56, and see above, pp. 48, 142, 172–3 and 202.
103. Among these were the new emphasis on party education and the emphasis on technical expertise outlined in Stalin's speech, 'On the Tasks of Managers', of February 1931. *Sochineniya*, vol. xiv, pp. 29–41.
104. RM, 22 September 1932.
105. S. Fitzpatrick, *Cultural Revolution*, p. 35.
106. This practice was attested to by several party members interviewed by the author in Moscow in 1986 about their lives as young Communists in the 1920s and 1930s.
107. As one historian put it, 'Life killed a beautiful theory. Instead of the death of the state, the death of "The State and Revolution"'. L. Fischer, quoted in Friedgut, p. 36n.
108. See Lewin, 'Society, State and Ideology', in *Cultural Revolution in Russia*, p. 74.
109. P, 25 May 1929.
110. For figures on the proportion of workers by social situation in the Moscow Party, see chapter 6. In general, the proportion in this period was about 70 per cent.
111. SK, 1927, nos 19–20, p. 95.
112. PS, 1930, nos 11–12, p. 62.
113. The requirement was specified in article 35 of the Party Rules.
114. *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh*, vol. 3, p. 58.
115. It is ironic that the Trotskyist attack on Stalin's 'bureaucratism' includes criticism of the fact that the 'Old Bolshevik' generation were purged in the mid-1930s to make way for new appointees. Even allowing for the fact that many of these new people were 'Stalin's creatures', the replacement of an elite which had dominated Soviet politics for twenty years by a new generation from the ranks cannot be regarded merely as a step backwards. For the Trotskyist critique, see Voslensky, pp. 90–1. Of course, it is impossible to defend the methods by which the replacement was effected.
116. P, 9 October 1926.
117. The party *stazh* of nearly all members was given in the list which appeared at the end of the stenographic report of the conference. *I Moskovskaya oblastnaya konferentsiya VKP(b)*, vol. 2, pp. 217–28.
118. This increase is partly explained by the fact that Central Committee representation on the MK and MGK had also increased.
119. Figures from lists printed in the stenographic report of the conference,

- bulletin no. 13, pp. 26–9.
120. Compare this with Khrushchev's observation, above, p. 83.
  121. For comparison, the national party census of 1927 found that 59.1 per cent of party members had joined since 1924, while only 33.9 per cent had joined before the end of the Civil War (Smitten, p. 55). By 1932 just under half of the Moscow party organisation had joined since January 1929. See Table 6.1.
  122. Coming to Moscow as a student, Khrushchev rose rapidly from a VUZ Communist cell to the secretaryship of Bauman *raikom*, then to that of Krasnaya Presnya *raikom*, and ultimately to the position of MK secretary.
  123. RM, 26 April 1928.
  124. RM, 22 September 1929.
  125. Davydova, p. 518.
  126. PS, 1932, no. 6.
  127. Cell buros were frequently accused of 'substituting' themselves for the lower organs. See, e.g., Iz TsK, 1925, no. 1.
  128. P, 25 May 1929.
  129. V.P. Pospekhov, *Deyatel'nost' moskovskoi partiinoi organizatsii po dal'neishemu razvitiyu vnutripartiinoi demokratii v gody pervoi pyatiletki, 1928–32 gg.* (afterferat dissertatsii, Moscow, 1976) p. 15.
  130. P, 10 October 1928. The only other time in the period before 1941 that direct elections were held was on the eve of the 'Great Purge' of 1937–8. Clearly an appeal to popular opinion was a valuable means of attacking middle-ranking party officials.
  131. TsGAOR 7952/3/253, 14.
  132. *pyatyi ob"edinennyi plenum MK i MKK* (1928) p. 108.
  133. Kravchenko, p. 53.
  134. See Bauman, *Polosa velikogo stroitel'stva*, pp. 92–3, for his reinstatement, and P, 19 September 1929, for the composition of the MK buro after his removal. No reason was given.
  135. J. Arch Getty (*Origins of the Great Purges*, p. 47) undoubtedly exaggerates the extent to which purge was in fact instrumental in removing 'corrupt, inactive, indisciplined, class-alien, or criminal persons'.
  136. P, 10 May 1929.
  137. The purge was not completed in Moscow until the spring of 1930.
  138. P, 3 April 1929.
  139. RM, 23 December 1929.
  140. There was some confusion over this issue. Officially, 'personal' activities were none of the purge commission's business, and the idea that concierges should be asked to report on the inhabitants of their buildings was discouraged (P, 3 April 1929). However, the evidence shows that personal behaviour, including drunkenness and promiscuity were high on the list of reasons for eventual exclusion from the party.
  141. Kravchenko, pp. 133–5, referring to the purge of 1933.
  142. *Martenovka*, quoted in TsGAOR, 7952/3/253, 25.

143. RM, 24 October 1929.
144. P, 22 May 1929.
145. P, 13 July 1929.
146. A report on the purge of the MK and MKK by Yanson is given in *IV Plenum MK* (Moscow, 1929) pp. 84–90.
147. *ibid.*, p. 102. The national average at all levels was about 11 per cent.
148. 6.9 per cent, as opposed to the national 11 per cent. *Ocherki istorii moskovskoi organizatsii*, 1st edn, p. 454. This was probably because there were fewer peasants in Moscow than the average.
149. 7.3 per cent of workers were excluded, 6.7 per cent of employees and 12.9 per cent of peasants. *ibid.*
150. Bauman, *Sotsialisticheskoe nastuplenie*, p. 75.

## CONCLUSION

1. See R.W. Davies, 'The Soviet Economic Crisis of 1932: The Crisis in the Towns' (unpublished paper presented to the Soviet Industrialisation Project Seminar, CREES, University of Birmingham, January 1985).
2. The height of the famine was 1933, but conditions in the countryside had deteriorated so far by the summer of 1932 that a new law was passed on 7 August providing for the death penalty in cases of pilfering and also in cases where state procurements of grain were withheld 'with evil intent'. A. Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR*, p. 179.
3. See Filtzer, pp. 81–7, and Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, pp. 288–93.
4. A year after the June 1931 Central Committee Plenum approved the Moscow city plan, which included provision for new accommodation for one million people over a three year period, only 80 000 workers and employees had received new housing, and the quality was very low. These issues will be covered in Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule* (forthcoming).
5. Shimotomai, *Moscow Under Stalinist Rule*.
6. Stalin was aware of this as early as 1926. See Kuromiya, 'The Crisis of Proletarian Identity', p. 294.
7. As he put it, 'The vanguard of the working class [ie the party] must stand above the particularistic, cliquish and "shoppest" interests prevailing, at times, in the workers' mood.' Quoted in Kuromiya, 'The Crisis of Proletarian Identity', p. 295.
8. The leadership did not always regard this 'blurring' with approval. See above, pp. 159–60.
9. Official mistakes, such as the demolition of Krasnyi Proletarii's foundry, were also often followed by long periods in which the local officials had to make do and mend without much help from their leaders. TsGAOR, 7952/3/82, *passim*.

10. Angelica Balabanoff, draft history of the Bolshevik revolution (unpublished, uncertain date). Balabanoff archive, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, file 216, p. 5.
11. The most striking example was Uglanov himself, who not only attacked the Leningraders himself in 1925, but also provided Bukharin with a platform from which to deliver the harshest personal diatribe against Zinoviev to date. See above, pp. 33–4.
12. See Vaksberg, 'Kak zhivoi s zhivymi', *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, 29 June 1988, p. 13, and Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 143. According to Vaksberg the people who led the opposition to Ryutin's execution were Voroshilov, Kirov, Ordzhonikidze and Kuibyshev and 'some other Politburo members'.
13. See also Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution*, pp. 167–72.
14. Claims that members of the 'Industrial Party' had blown up bridges, murdered Communists and sabotaged factories (see, for example, RM, 26 November 1930) reflected a reality in which accidents were reported daily in the local press.
15. RM, 8 December 1930.
16. Peter Kenez, quoted above, p. 251, n. 20.
17. Balabanoff archive, file 223, note on the Bolshevik revolution.

## APPENDIX 1

1. Where possible the initials and posts of the members have been given, but this information is not always available.
2. RM, 13 August 1924.
3. RM, 30 January 1925.
4. P, 15 December 1925.
5. *IV plenum MK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1926).
6. P, 18 January 1927.
7. P, 29 November 1927.
8. RM, 9 May 1928.
9. RM, 29 January 1929.
10. P, 21 October 1928.
11. RM, 28 November 1928.
12. Small size of MK buro indicates that this new body was a stopgap.
13. RM, 7 April 1929. These were to be the nucleus of the new *obkom*, hence the *ex-officio* posts and the appointment of Bulat.
14. RM, 14 June 1929.
15. P, 19 September 1929.
16. RM, 10 January 1930.
17. P, 15 June 1930.
18. RM, 27 July 1930.
19. RM, 27 February 1931.



20. RM, 31 January 1932.

21. RM, 31 January 1932.

## APPENDIX 2

1. These workplans graphically illustrate the range of the MK's responsibilities, and the number of other organisations which co-operated in policy-making. They also show that despite the wide range of the agenda and the stress on party officials at the time, the MK was more successful than the Smolensk party organisation in fulfilling the tasks it set itself. Moscow's record in fulfilling these tasks can be traced, for example through *Rabochaya Moskva* and subsequent plenum reports. The source for these plans is the stenographic report of the second 1929 MK Plenum, *II Plenum MK VKP(b)* (Moscow, 1929) pp. 32–7.

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    opis 15: dela 10 (Dinamo)  
            165 (Manometr')

7952 (History of Factories)

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        dela 94, 253, 258, 267, 282 (Serp i Molot)

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